

# **2017 National Delegate Conference**

## **Decisions**

- M1 Developing An Organising Branch**
- M2 Organising and growing our membership in private contractors**
- M3 An organising strategy for the Social Care workforce**
- M5 Recruiting and organising Black members in the fragmented workforce**
- M13 Mental Health Champions**
- M14 Mental Health Champions**
- M16 Invisible or Non-Apparent Disabilities**
- M17 Dying to work campaign**
- M18 Stepping up the campaign against bullying and harassment**
- M19 Tackling Stress**
- M20 Pay - Tackling In-Work Poverty**
- M30 The Crisis in Health and Social Care**
- M32 Crisis in social care - call for a special conference**
- M33 STPs - The future of the NHS?**
- M36 Why we need to build a new housing consensus for affordable and decent homes for all**
- M39 Getting the public on our side - public service campaigning**
- M41 Challenging the Trade Union Act 2016**
- M42 Media Portrayal of Older People**
- M55 UNISON and the WASPI campaign**
- M59 Child marriage is child labour**
- M61 Working globally for LGBT rights**

2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions

- M73**     **Exiting the EU - A Fair Deal For Workers and Public Services**
- M74**     **The Great Repeal Bill - Protecting Devolution**
- M75**     **Immigration and the effects of the EU Referendum and the Brexit Vote**
- M84**     **EU Exit - Protecting the Northern Ireland Peace Process**
- M85**     **Standing together for LGBT equality**
- M86**     **Race Inequality in the Workplace**
- M87**     **Challenging Racism and Xenophobia**
- M100**    **Abortion Rights (50th Anniversary of the 1967 Act)**
- M101**    **Branch funding**
- M102**    **Branch Funding**
- M103**    **Activity-Based Budgeting**
- M104**    **Activity Based Budgeting and the Regional Pool Structure**
- M105**    **Activity Based Budgeting and the Regional Pool Structure**
- ME10**    **Support 'The Total Eclipse of the S\_N' Campaign**
- CEC1**    **After the General Election**
- CB**      **Pensions and Climate Change**
- CC**      **Health and Social Care Integration**
- CF**      **EU Exit and Workers' Rights**
- R1**      **Rule C Becoming a Member**
- R2**      **Rule D Structure of the Union at National Level**
- R3**      **Rule M Data Protection Act policy**

## **Motions**

### **1. Developing An Organising Branch**

#### **Carried as Amended: 1.1**

Conference recognises the increasingly hostile environment in which UNISON branches are operating. Austerity cuts have reduced the number of activists and put further pressure on facility time; while increased fragmentation of the workforce has made organising more difficult. Meanwhile the need for us to develop an organising approach has never been greater. This organising approach cannot be focused simply at branch level. Branches need to feel connected to national strategies to tackle the severe attacks on living standards and services created by austerity measures rather than simply being left to deal with them on a branch by branch basis.

There is no one single model for an effective organising branch and Conference welcomes the various initiatives that branches, regions and the centre have taken to develop an organising approach, including the development of:

- 1) New branch structures including mergers and arrangements for joint branch working;
- 2) Shop Front organising facilities;
- 3) Digital support for organising;
- 4) Advice on and support for facility time agreements;

## 5) The use of Fighting Fund Organisers.

The challenge facing branches is that with all the other pressures activists often find it difficult to make time for organising, as other competing priorities crowd out organising work.

Conference believes that one way of overcoming this barrier is for branches to agree to establish an organising working group made up of activists solely focused on organising. Their remit will include developing an organising plan as part of the Joint Branch Assessment process, which they will then help implement.

The aim of the plan should specify how the organising working group members will help:

- a) Increase recruitment so that UNISON is stronger in the workplace;
- b) Develop new activists, to improve communications between UNISON, the members and the employers;
- c) Ensure that new activists are trained and supported, with the aim, wherever possible, of getting an activist in each workplace;
- d) Reach out to workers in the fragmented workforce;
- e) To encourage democratic participation in UNISON by members through the democratic structures and Self Organised Groups.

Conference therefore calls on regions and branches to develop this approach to help branches deal with the challenges we face.

Conference also calls on the National Executive Council to ensure that a suite of materials and training is developed to support this approach.

In light of the increasingly serious challenges faced by branches, Conference calls on the National Executive Council to produce a paper before next year's National Delegate Conference setting out the various options available to branches to deal with the fragmented workforce and increasing pressure on activists.

## **2. Organising and growing our membership in private contractors**

**Carried as Amended: 2.2, 2.1, 2.3**

Conference notes that despite UNISON's necessary and continued campaigns against privatisation, the outsourcing of public services continues apace.

Conference completely condemns this Tory government's relentless attack on the public sector and continues to call on the government to properly fund publically delivered services. However, whilst privatisation remains a reality, conference also recognises that the union must continue to organise and grow our membership in private contractors. Conference also notes that not all our membership in the private sector has come via TUPE from the public sector. Many of our members have never worked for a public employer or work in areas of private sector growth, like social care.

Conference welcomes last year's rule change to establish the new National Private Contractors Forum. This forum is giving our private contractor members a real voice in UNISON and a route to engage in the

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

democratic structures of the union. This is a unique opportunity for the union to reach out into our membership in private companies, building our power and our ability to protect these workers.

In order to make these new structures a success at all levels, the union must pull together; focusing on building capacity and activism. We recognise the huge challenges the fragmented and outsourced workforce places on branches and resources, including attacks on facility time that make our reps' job even harder.

However the union must support our reps in private contractors, and recruit and train more. Private Contractor representatives need to be an integral part of branch structures and require support from branch officers and regional staff. Conference notes the good work that has been done so far:

- 1) Regional heads of private contractors in every region;
- 2) A new annual national training seminar for private contractor reps;
- 3) A new National Private Contractor Forum and several company forums.

In order to further our good work and to build our strength in private contractors, conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to continue to prioritise the union's activity within private contractors and to work with:

- a) Regions to:
  - i) Continue to prioritise organising in private contractors and to allocate resources;

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

- ii) To map their private contractor membership to identify on regional targets for organising (linking with the national organising targets where appropriate);
  - iii) Identify and develop activists to populate and engage with the national company forums and National Private Contractors Forum;
  - iv) Work with branches to look at how best to group and allocate private sector members, including new models of organisation where appropriate;
  - v) Focus on supporting branches and members to gain recognition in private employers.
- b) Branches to:
- i) Identify, through the Joint Branch Assessment, key private contractors in their branch where there is the opportunity for organising and activist development;
  - ii) Where possible, nominate a member of the branch executive to have strategic oversight of the fragmented workforce in their branch;
  - iii) Engage with commissioners to lobby for a return of services to in-house provision;
  - iv) Actively recruit, train and support reps from within the private contractor workforce
  - v) Use procurement processes to engage with employers on ethical procurement codes and policies and compliance with the Modern Slavery Act to ensure there are no abuses in the employer's global supply chain



**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

- vi) Engage in procurement processes to put pressure on tendering bodies to include priorities like the living wage and union recognition as conditions of transfer;
  - vii) Support their members in the private sectors to attend and engage with the private company forums and relevant regional structures.
- c) The Private Contractors Unit to:
- i) Prioritise increasing the number of companies we have national recognition with or a national relationship with;
  - ii) Work with all parts of the union to continue the campaign against insecure work and zero hours contracts, a real problem for workers in the private sector;
  - iii) Work with the Learning and Organising Services team to develop a programme of training for activists in private companies that is both relevant and accessible;
  - iv) Work with the Strategic Organising Unit to identify and promote a cross-section of examples of good practice in private contractor membership organisation and organising strategies.
  - v) Work to develop and promote good practice in ethical procurement so that members can engage with their employers on the ethical dimensions of procurement.

### **3. An organising strategy for the Social Care workforce**

**Carried as Amended: 3.1**

Social care plays a vital and growing role in our society. Yet increasing demand, falling real terms funding, and increasingly complex care needs has put the sector under significant strain.

Social Care workers are often the people who are at the sharp end following cuts in public services elsewhere – dealing with clients who cannot be admitted to hospital, or are discharged too soon, who are at home waiting for care assessments.

Most care workers are highly committed to the work they do, but such conditions are putting them under significant strain. If we want a social care system that can meet the needs of our ageing population and treat recipients in a dignified way, then we need to invest in the workforce that provides it.

Conference welcomes the work done in Scotland by trade unions, working with the Scottish Government, to develop a 'Fair Work' agenda which has included a commitment to pay the Living Wage to all workers providing social care and ensure that a range of workforce matters are included in procurement.

Conference further welcomes the “Care Workers for Change” organising initiative in the North West which is growing UNISON density and activity in the sector through the campaign for fair funding, decent jobs and quality services.”

Conference applauds the work around the Ethical Care Charter and welcomes the decisions of councils to sign up to it.

Conference recognises that social care workers are an under pressure and growing section of the public service workforce. Conference acknowledges that there are significant challenges to organising this group of workers; they are often widely scattered, or lone workers and they may be subject to zero or nominal hour's contracts. Workers doing the same job, for the same contracting authority, may be divided amongst several employers on widely varying terms and conditions. Many will also be required to meet stringent regulatory standards for the first time.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to develop a specific organising strategy for the social care workforce. This should consist of a recruitment strategy aimed at increasing UNISON's presence amongst social care workers and a learning and organising strategy aimed at supporting members in expanding roles and in meeting regulatory requirements.

Any strategy must recognise the anti-union hostility of many large commercialised providers and include a campaign for public sector commissioners to ensure trade union access and employer neutrality towards union organisation as an objective in considering all future social care contracts.

## **5. Recruiting and organising Black members in the fragmented workforce**

### **Carried as Amended: 5.1**

It is important that Black workers and members are equipped for the challenges within the changing and evolving landscape of the UK today. Conference recognises that a high proportion of Black workers

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

eligible to join UNISON work in the fragmented workforce where they experience low pay and poor working conditions.

Conference believes that recruitment is more than just handing out leaflets. Branches need assistance to reach out to Black workers and members in the fragmented workforce. These workers need a revised strategy to engage them as the traditional approach is weak at best and not effective at worst.

Our existing members in this niche sectors need to be organised and encouraged to become activists. They will then need continual support, bespoke training and mentoring.

UNISON should explore effective and clear pathways which will assist Black members in not only developing as activists, but becoming leaders for the future.

It is therefore important that financial reasons do not become a barrier to Black members in the fragmented workforce becoming active. If an employer does not recognise trade unions (UNISON), it does not have a legal duty to give members paid time off to attend training to become workplace reps or health and safety reps etc.

Conference calls on the National Executive Committee to work with the National Black Members Committee to request:

- 1) Information and resources targeted at Black members and workers in the fragmented workforce;

- 2) Providing financial assistance for members who wish to become workplace representatives but are unable to access paid time from their employer;
- 3) Further specific training targeted towards potential Black leaders;
- 4) Setting up a short life working group with members of the Development and Organisation Committee to review points 1 – 3 and how this can be actioned through joint work with the various National Service Groups Committees, Self Organised Group Committees and explore how this might be achieved.

### **13. Mental Health Champions**

**Carried**

Conference recognises that good mental health support for members in UNISON is of vital importance and congratulates Cymru/Wales Region on their initiatives and development of Mental Health Champions.

UNISON Cymru/Wales has been active on mental health for some time. Last year, with the help of Mind Cymru and Time to Change Wales, Cymru/Wales Disabled Self Organised Group launched their mental health awareness training. They have developed a mental health champions training programme for members and the first champions graduated in April. Participants completed a two day training course designed by the self-organised group and it was run with the assistance of a mental health practitioner. The training gave members the confidence and skills needed to undertake this new role as they help colleagues with mental health problems by directing them to the best

available help and support. The feedback has been fantastic.

Mental health problems are much more widespread than people think. One in four people will experience them at some stage in their life, so it is extremely likely that a family member or close colleague at work has been affected. Yet unfortunately, mental health is still surrounded by prejudice, ignorance and fear. The stigma can lead to isolation and exclusion, making it more difficult to recover. This is no way to deal with something that is so common and the truth is that mental well-being is not taken as seriously as physical well-being.

Mental health related problems are frequently caused by difficult situations in the workplace. We know that UK Conservative Government's austerity cuts directly lead to very high levels of anxiety for those who lose their jobs and for those remaining, who face the pressure of being forced to do a lot more work with fewer resources.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Encourage other regions within UNISON to consider taking forward this initiative and develop similar schemes in their regions;
- 2) Seek to encourage an interest in good mental health by education and publicity, particularly in UNISON publications, e.g. 'U' and 'Focus' magazines and the UNISON website;

- 3) Work with Labour Link to draw attention to MPs and members of devolved governments the need to fund good mental health services.

## **14. Mental Health Champions**

**Carried**

Mental health issues are reported to affect one in three of us throughout our lifetime. Although statistically women are more likely to develop common mental health issues than men it is an issue that impacts all of our members. A recent survey also suggests that there has been a marked increase in mental health issues in young women whilst it has remained consistent with young men. As a union with over one million members, this is an issue we cannot overlook.

Mental health issues can affect people in many different ways, including barriers to understanding, social anxiety and low self-esteem. This can result in valued ideas and great potential being missed.

UNISON takes pride in being inclusive of all our members and this is as it should be. However, it is possible, even likely, that we have many members with a great amount of potential and skills to contribute, who simply feel unable to come forward due to fear of rejection and validity.

As a branch whose members are instrumental in providing care to the public of the North East who experience mental health issues, Northumberland Tyne and Wear Health branch would like to put forward this motion which will both support and promote all UNISON's members who feel unable, at this time, to

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

engage with our union and to become active, due to their current mental health issues.

Conference notes that:

- 1) Mental Health issues remain a veiled cloak of stigma. UNISON must be seen to be proactive in informing our members that we will support them to develop the skills they need to contribute in whatever way they feel able to. We need to challenge stigma, enabling trust and confidence that all our members are valued. It is essential that we enable those experiencing mental health issues to feel open and honest knowing that they will not be judged;
- 2) We need to provide real support. Where required, it should be possible for UNISON to provide Mental Health Champions. Whether at conferences, training days or policy events, delegates/members should have easy access to a recognised and experienced mental health practitioner who can provide skilled and approved intervention to enable full participation.
- 3) UNISON needs to promote tolerance of mental health issues. Some Mental Health conditions can cause cognitive, emotional and behavioural changes. This can result in an individual presenting differently than expected. Causes for this may include anxiety, mental stimulation and/or frustration. Where this arises, members/delegates should be mindful and mental health issues are included under disability as a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

Conference therefore calls upon UNISON's National Executive Council to:



- a) Take a lead in promoting awareness of mental health issues;
- b) Develop a strategy to enable and support members with mental health issues, allowing them to feel valued and able to become involved with UNISON;
- c) Ensure accessibility to Mental Health Champions at conferences, training and policy days;
- d) Promote tolerance of mental health issues at UNISON events.

## **16. Invisible or Non-Apparent Disabilities**

**Carried**

Conference believes that disabled people and young disabled people in particular are being subjected to discrimination because of disabilities that are not immediately apparent or a diagnosis has not yet been made. The impact of such disabilities can lead to people being wrongly labelled as “lazy”, or worse, and feeding the stereotype of those with invisible or non-apparent disabilities.

Conference also believes that young people (disabled or not) are more likely to have less resources than their older counterparts in terms of knowledge, experience and strategies in challenging attitudes to invisible or non-apparent disabilities.

Conference further believes that UNISON has a vital role to play in challenging this situation in the workplace, as collective action and support is far better than going it alone.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with the National Disabled Members committee and Young members forum to produce an information and negotiation fact sheet on invisible /non apparent disabilities branches to raise with their employers;
- 2) Disseminate information on the subject to branches and regions to raise awareness with members of this issue.

## **17.Dying to work campaign**

**Carried**

Conference notes that the Equality Act provides protections against discriminatory treatment based on the concept of Protected Characteristics.

Currently workers with a terminal illness are not classified as having a Protected Characteristic and therefore have very limited legal protection against employers dismissing them due to illness.

Conference notes that employers are therefore free to dismiss terminally ill workers once they have made reasonable adjustments to the employee's job to assist with the illness. Conference agrees that the last thing a terminally ill worker would need is to have to fight for the right to continue working and not face the indignity of being sacked.

In addition Conference notes that the loss of death in service benefits to terminally ill workers sacked before death is a further distress at a time when the future security for a family should be protected.

Therefore Conference agrees to support the TUC's Dying to Work Campaign and to lobby MPs to establish new legislation which seeks:

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

- 1) To get terminally ill workers covered by the Protective Rights at Work in line with those covered by the Pregnancy/Maternity Rights;
- 2) To protect death in service benefits;
- 3) To allow workers with terminal illness to die in dignity.

Conference calls on all branches and bargaining groups to approach employers to sign up to the Dying to Work Charter which commits employers to treat workers with a terminal illness with dignity, providing security of work, peace of mind and the right to choose the best course of action for them and their families.

### **18. Stepping up the campaign against bullying and harassment**

**Carried**

Conference reaffirms its policy of a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and harassment.

Conference welcomes the development of the work by UNISON's young members to raise the issue of bullying and harassment of young workers, and notes the disturbing results of the survey of young members conducted in October/November 2016 on this issue which revealed:

- 1) Nearly 40% of young workers have been bullied or harassed in the past;
- 2) Nearly 10% of young workers are currently being bullied or harassed;
- 3) A third of those bullied have had to take time off work because of it;

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

- 4) One in eight needed medication because of bullying/harassment;
- 5) Three young workers were hospitalised as result of bullying/harassment.

The survey also showed that there is a shocking lack of knowledge about employers bullying and harassment policies, and that reporting the issue made no difference in over half of the instances.

Conference believes that it is time to step up our campaigning against bullying and harassment which affects not only many young people, but is an issue that affects the entire workforce and service delivery, and is also often found to be particularly directed at workers who are women, Black, disabled, lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Commission a research project into this issue to identify the scale and impact of the problem as well as any good agreements, and policy and practice by employers;
- b) Report the findings to National Delegate Conference 2018 and hold a specific fringe meeting on the issue at that Conference;
- c) Develop a strategic response to the issue that addresses the need for:
  - i) Support of members who experience bullying or harassment;

- ii) Provision of education and training for activists on dealing with cases of bullying and harassment as individual matters and as an organising issue;
- iii) Appropriate information and support to those seeking to negotiate improved policies and practices with employers and their organisations.

## **19. Tackling Stress**

**Carried**

Conference understands the large scale of harm to members caused by work related stress, including sickness and serious illness, and the personal cost to members and their families, and even premature death. The 2016 TUC survey of safety reps confirmed that stress was the biggest health and safety concern and that it is getting worse, no doubt to the cuts being ravaged on the public sector. Stress accounts for 45% of all working days lost due to ill health, and that the cost to our employers and the economy as a whole runs into billions of pounds each year.

Conference notes that the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Management Standards approach to tackling stress refers to the following six primary causes: demands, control, support, relationships, role and change. Furthermore, the HSE Management Standards approach comprises of a staff survey, and then focus group discussion of the results leading to action plans to address the issues identified. It recognises that the solutions need to come from the very people it affects.

Conference further notes that full branch involvement in the process can significantly improve the effectiveness of this approach. Where the branch is fully involved,

then the survey is undertaken by the branch, and it can be carried out on the basis of confidentiality rather than anonymity. This should improve the questionnaire response rate, and we can ask for people's names, jobs, teams, and locations. In this way we can drill down and get a very much more detailed picture. We can identify the hotspots, where things are really bad, and the specific causes behind them. Full branch involvement may also improve focus group involvement, and the monitoring of the action plans, and should improve staff confidence in the whole process.

Conference accepts that full branch involvement in the process is a significant commitment, but that evidence from branches in the Northern Region, especially Gateshead Local Government and North Tees and Hartlepool Health, shows that it is:

- 1) A very real support to our members affected by stress;
- 2) Helps prevent the harm that stress can cause;
- 3) Helps develop partnership working with management;
- 4) Demonstrates the union effect;
- 5) Represents a considerable opportunity for the recruitment of members and reps.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to provide significant support for this initiative, to provide the necessary guidance, training and assistance to help make this approach available to all branches.

## **20. Pay - Tackling In-Work Poverty**

**Carried as Amended: 20.1, 20.2**

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

Conference notes research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation in December 2016 which showed that a record 3.8 million people – one eighth of the workforce – are below the poverty line despite being in work.

This means that a shocking total of 7.4 million people, including 2.6 million children, are living in poverty despite being part of working households in the fourth largest economy in the world.

Conference is alarmed that, as a result of the government's autumn statement, estimates suggest that the average public sector worker will be £3,700 worse off unless the trade union movement uses its power and organises effectively to reverse this by 2021.

Conference further notes TUC analysis in January 2017 which found that household debt rose sharply over 2016, with weak wage growth leaving more families reliant on borrowing to support their living standards and also pay their energy bills.

More than this, Conference is appalled by the increasing need of public service staff to resort to using food banks to supplement what they are able to buy with their shrinking wage packet.

Conference believes this is a shameful indictment of successive governments' pay policies and the ongoing damage being wreaked on the economy and workers by Tory austerity and tax credit cuts.

Six years of freezes and caps in public sector pay means that the median public sector wage is now more than £2,500 lower in real terms than it was in 2010.

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

Conference is angered that this is set to deteriorate further with the 1% pay cap set to remain until at least the end of this parliament in 2020.

In addition, Conference notes the 2016 national insurance rises and that government changes to exit payments mean that some UNISON members stand to lose out on the amounts of redundancy pay they may receive in future.

Conference believes that poor public service pay does not merely affect those delivering public services, but also impacts on the services themselves, with many staff resorting to agency work or leaving the public services altogether. A number of UNISON sectors, such as social care, planning and health, are experiencing growing problems with the recruitment and retention of staff.

Conference does however congratulate the many UNISON activists – along with their branches, regions and service groups – who have worked to achieve the real living wage for our members in recent years.

The struggle to end poverty pay and the social consequences associated with it, is a struggle that this trade union needs to urgently adopt. The slogan of a £10/hour minimum wage for all workers, with no exceptions, is one which all our members would be willing to campaign for. Such a slogan could be taken up by the wider trade union and labour movement and gain real momentum if the larger unions were clear about developing a strategy to achieve it. Such a strategy should aim to deliver it within a timescale that workers can believe in and would be willing to fight for.



**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue campaigning for an end to the public sector pay cap and highlighting the consequent falling living standards for staff;
- 2) Campaign against cuts to in-work social security such as tax credits and Universal Credit;
- 3) Expose the wider impact that low pay is having on our public services, particularly in terms of recruitment and retention problems in key sectors;
- 4) Campaign for the Living Wage Foundation's real living wage to be applied across the UK;
- 5) Where the real Living Wage is achieved, work with the TUC to highlight the campaign for a minimum hourly rate of £10 an hour;
- 6) Continue to promote RPI, not CPI, as the preferred measure of inflation;
- 7) Monitor new public sector apprentices and include them in collective bargaining so they do not start on the statutory minimum;
- 8) Continue to secure increases in holiday pay in line with European rulings;
- 9) Highlight the issue of "total pay", to take into account wider issues such as pensions, grading, allowances and unsocial hours' payments;
- 10) Continue to explore industrial action strategies in the face of the 2016 Trade Union Act and the

possibility of coordinated action across UNISON sectors and service groups as well as across the public sector; and in 2018;

- 11) Call on the TUC to organise a public sector pay lobby of Parliament in summer 2017.
- 12) Make the demand for a £10/hour minimum wage across all public services central to UNISON's campaigning, with the demand prominent on the website and throughout public material.

### **30.The Crisis in Health and Social Care**

#### **Carried as Amended: 30.1**

Conference, there are three areas of concern. The crisis in Social Care, the underfunding of our NHS and decimation of our Community Care services, all combine to create a perfect storm.

The scale of the problems now faced by adult social care providers are enormous, and are the direct result of massive Government cuts to funding. The National Care Association has said that we are now beyond the crisis point and are now on the edge of a cliff.

A survey by UNISON found that 65 per cent of homecare, residential support and day services staff said they has less time to spend with those they care for because of staff shortages and 36 per cent said rationing of supplies had increased as a result of budget cuts.

The Local Government Association estimates that the gap in social care funding will be at least £2.6 billion unless the Government urgently injects more cash into the service.

Raising Council Tax will not be enough to solve the problems and will only place the lowest paid under even more financial pressure. Net Social Care expenditure has dropped in real terms from £8.1 billion in 2005-6 to £6.3 billion, a drop of a fifth. This is further exacerbated by the national shortage of community health care workers and nurses creating gaps in the services to our most vulnerable citizens.

Recruiting and retaining staff is crucial to our NHS and the campaign of denigration and vilification of the NHS by Government Ministers combined with years of pay cuts and a lack of real terms pay increases has led to a situation where staff are leaving the NHS and critical posts in our emergency departments cannot be filled.

As our underfunded hospitals struggle to function because of further Government cuts, they are faced with having nowhere to send elderly patients when their treatment is complete. They cannot find beds in the hospitals but they also cannot discharge them to the community as the services are not there to support them.

This leads to a crisis situation as beds are blocked and people are forced to stay in hospital. It is creating an intolerable vicious circle and only a clear policy of properly funding social care and health services together with a coherent plan for the integration will begin to address this crisis.

Conference therefore resolves to:

- 1) Campaign for properly and adequately funded Health and Social Care Services;

- 2) Promote and publicise within our national, regional and local press and media our NHS and Social Care Champions;
- 3) Continue to oppose cuts to jobs and services within Health and Social Care.
- 4) Conference agrees to affiliate to 'Health Campaigns Together' which organised the massive demo in defence of the NHS on 4 March 2017.

### **32.Crisis in social care - call for a special conference**

**Fell**

### **33.STPs - The future of the NHS?**

**Carried**

Conference notes that despite their often bland phrasing and heavy cosmetic decoration with proposals for improved integration of services, collaboration between providers and with commissioners, and public health measures which we could all endorse, the 44 Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) in England represent proposals for over £24 billion of cuts, "efficiencies" and "savings" by 2020-21, which can only be at the expense of health workers and patients.

While some STPs pull up short of spelling out explicit plans for rationalisation, reconfiguration, back office consolidation, bed cuts and staffing reductions, most of them set course in that direction and seek to enlist local authorities in support of plans that will reduce access to services for many of the local communities they are elected to represent.

2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions

UNISON notes that while many STPs contain plans for new hospitals, expansion of existing hospitals, new community facilities and new 'digital' services, there is little or no NHS capital available to fund these developments, leaving many of them an empty promise, alongside a real plan for cuts in existing services.

UNISON opposes austerity-driven cutbacks in hospital, community and mental health services, whether these be presented in the form of STPs or less overt moves towards reconfiguration, cost-cutting and consolidation by trusts. We agree to support national campaigns on this and campaigns to defend local access to hospital services until new, superior, alternative evidence-based services are developed, properly staffed and funded, that ensure safe and improved services for patients.

Conference also supports the TUC campaign for an end to the seven years of real terms funding freeze that is squeezing the life out of our NHS, reducing performance on key services, and undermining public confidence in the NHS – with the threat of four more years to come. Conference calls for funding to be increased immediately from the current disastrous level with further increases year by year towards the levels of comparable European and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries, and for an end to the waste of billions on a competitive market system.

While endorsing the aspiration to greater integration of health and social care for the benefit of patients, UNISON notes that the application of means-tested charges for social care, the extent of the enforced cutbacks in budgets and raised eligibility thresholds,

coupled with the fragmentation and privatisation of most domiciliary care and the private ownership of nursing homes prevents integration with an NHS that is still funded through general taxation and free at point of use.

Although in principle we welcome NHS England's moves to reverse, or in some cases override the Lansley Health and Social Care Act, restore strategic planning and develop a fresh collaboration between competing trusts, UNISON notes that the Act remains in place. As a result many irresponsible Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), not least in Staffordshire, are continuing to contract out services, some awarding fresh contracts to Virgin and other private sector providers even as other contracts end in failure. STPs do not reverse the Act, and cannot eradicate the divisive market system deepened in 2012.

UNISON therefore will work and campaign for new legislation, such as the NHS Reinstatement Bill, that is promoted in the Commons by Margaret Greenwood MP, to reverse the 2012 Act, dismantle the costly and wasteful NHS market system, and restore the NHS as a service publicly financed, publicly owned and publicly provided.

### **36. Why we need to build a new housing consensus for affordable and decent homes for all**

**Carried as Amended: 36.1, 36.2, 36.3, 36.4**

The never-ending UK housing crisis means that millions of workers and their families live in expensive, overcrowded and insecure homes.

Often these homes are long distances away from work or family and involve many hours of daily commutes.

Conversely UNISON research has shown many families have grown up children living with them not out of choice, but of necessity as they cannot afford to buy or rent a home of their own. The cuts to housing benefits have exacerbated the problem of young people being unable to move out and live independently. These cuts have also meant that young people may be forced to stay in a family setting that is hostile or even violent towards them.

Conference notes that for women the housing crisis has additional elements which impact directly on their safety and wellbeing:

- a) 90% of lone parents are women, with a significant proportion of these women being low paid and living in poverty. With no access to decent social housing, these women and their children are among the most vulnerable to exploitation by unscrupulous landlords;
- b) Women attempting to escape domestic abuse or those facing relationship or family breakdowns are unable to secure safe and affordable housing, in large part due to the enormous pressure on all kinds of social housing;
- c) A recent Shelter report highlighted the issue of sex for rent landlords – offering accommodation free to women “willing” to provide sexual services in exchange. For unemployed women, those with no recourse to public funds, or simply women with no deposit or the means to pay for high private rents this can be a desperate last resort.

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

Recently the Government have announced a number of high profile schemes and incentives to fix the housing crisis. All have failed.

Home ownership is on a downwards spiral, increasingly numbers of people in work are reliant on housing benefit and the number of social housing homes available shrinks year by year.

The chief reason for this housing failure is that there is no long a political consensus in the UK on the need for direct investment and subsidy in public housing.

From 1945 to the 1970's political parties of all kinds used to compete on how many affordable homes they could build each year.

This was because there was a widespread consensus that it was the duty of the state to ensure that everyone was securely and safely housed.

In order to build homes we must rebuild this consensus.

Conference welcomes the success of "Axe the Housing Act" and housing campaigners, trade unions, councils and councillors, residents and tenants organisations and others in defeating some of the worst elements of the Housing and Planning Act 2016, including the Tory manifesto commitment to introduce "Pay to Stay". We recognise the importance of building on those successes and of continuing to work with "Axe the Housing Act" and others and supporting initiatives such as the March for Homes on Saturday 24 June

Conference resolves to call upon the National Executive Council to:



**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

- a) Seek to campaign with organisations such as Axe the Housing Act and Defend Council Housing, other unions and residents to restore direct investment in public housing;
- b) Seek to ensure that ensure that young people's voices are heard in this campaign;
- c) Make the case that this is the only way to solve the housing crisis."

Make the case that this is the only way to solve the housing crisis.

To ask our Labour Link to work to make a new housing consensus a top issue within the Labour Party taking into consideration the following principles:

- 1) Subsidy should be redirected from housing benefit being paid to landlords to building public homes;
- 2) Governments and councils must borrow to invest in a mass house building programme. Not only building homes but putting people back into work to build them and therefore pumping money back into the economy;
- 3) An increase in the supply of public homes would help bring down the cost of home ownership and make this a real option once again in expensive areas;
- 4) Not only should homes be well built, environmentally efficient, affordable and secure but to be in a decent condition. Public landlords including councils and housing associations must be accountable and democratic to all stakeholders including having a meaningful resident involvement and include the recognition of trade unions.

Conference further calls upon the National Executive Council to work with all appropriate bodies to raise awareness of the disproportionate impact of the housing crisis on women; and to lobby and campaign for action to tackle exploitative landlords

### **39. Getting the public on our side - public service campaigning**

**Carried as Amended: 39.1,39.23,39.3,**

Close to a decade since the beginning of the global financial crisis, the pressure on public services and those that provide them remains unrelenting. Despite the unprecedented cuts that our members and the communities that they serve have already experienced, a raft of further measures now threaten to push services to breaking point. These include but are not limited to:

- 1) The £3bn of 'savings' being imposed on schools in England by 2019/20;
- 2) A growing social care funding crisis across the UK;
- 3) The funding crisis in the NHS, which the Red Cross have described as a humanitarian crisis;
- 4) Continuing cuts and redundancies in local government and police.

The backdrop for the increased pressure on public services is the continued fallout from the EU referendum result, in terms of both economic uncertainty and political turbulence, in the UK and internationally.

In this context UNISON, as the largest public services trade union, carries a heavy responsibility. Not only must the union counter the strong headwinds and continue to

make the arguments for an alternative to the cuts and underinvestment that have characterised the austerity decade. We must also use our member's experiences, campaign resources, evidence and expertise to win over wider public opinion for an alternative that properly recognises the value of properly funded public services to all of our lives and the vital importance of services that meet the needs of our diverse communities .

Many people recognise and value public services, provided directly by local government, the NHS and other national funding organisations. Working people have always favoured public services being public i.e. provided for social need rather than profit. The difficulty is to win the battle that public services at their current level are required when "there is no money" or "savings have to be found". This is particularly difficult if council taxes or regressive forms of taxation "have to rise" to cover the "rising costs." People are faced with a false choice of cuts to services or further impoverishment with local tax increases, often shamefully implemented by Labour councils.

A joined-up campaign to defend and fight for public services has to be linked to the strategy of councillors and elected representatives of the labour movement demanding more funding, but for this to be taken from the rich, not working people. There are easily enough resources in society to adequately fund services and provide decent rewards for our members, but this point needs to be made forcefully and confidently.

Linking proper funding for public services with nationalisation of key services and an effective clawing

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

back of wealth from the 1% in society, could be a something which UNISON's leadership and the labour and trade union movement as a whole can articulate, for a coherent campaign to be built.

The UNISON public service champions campaign, launched following support for motion 26 at National Delegate Conference 2016, seeks to help address the challenge of winning over public opinion. Motion 27 passed also set out a strong anti-privatisation agenda to follow too. This campaign, supported by the General Political Fund, has sought to reignite the sense of pride we should all feel in public services, and create the conditions in which our more political messages about the need for an alternative to austerity are better received - including those already being pursued regionally, locally, related to service specific demands or related to the impact of austerity on minority public services, such as services targeted at LGBT people. The philosophy behind the campaign is that people will only fight for it if they are reminded why they should care about it.

Conference now calls on the National Executive Council to continue to pursue the champions campaign in the period ahead. This should involve:

- a) Further communications and advertising to the public that highlights the valuable work that our members undertake and the pressures that they face;
- b) Harnessing members voices from the frontline in their own words;

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

- c) Working with branches, regions, retired members and self-organised groups to ensure appropriate co-ordination with on the ground campaigns;
- d) Working with the national SOG committees and National Young Members Forum to ensure the appropriate inclusion of minority public services in the champions campaign;
- e) Taking the campaign out into communities, including UNISON attendance at national, regional and local community events such as Pride events and community festivals;
- f) Working with service groups on their cuts and pay campaigns;
- g) Developing further campaign tools and materials (including digital social media) that can be used across the union to contribute to the campaign;
- h) Making it clear that UNISON's position is for fully funded public services paid for by significant taxation of the rich, rather than further regressive taxation.
- i) Lobbying politicians at all levels to stand up for public services and those that provide them;
- j) Building to the 2020 general election so that there is mass accumulation of voters ready to vote for public services;
- k) Evaluating the effectiveness of the campaign.

**41. Challenging the Trade Union Act 2016**

**Carried as Amended: 41.1**

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

Conference continues to condemn the Trade Union Act 2016 in Great Britain and its various restrictive and draconian regulations to hamper the ability of unions to bargain and to advance pay and conditions in the workplace. In Wales the Act was opposed by the Wales Assembly Government and nearly every local council and health board because of its specific focus on public service trade unionism. Conference, therefore welcomes the Wales Assembly Government seeking to pass their own Trade Union Act to control industrial relations in devolved public services in areas of industrial action in 'important public services', facility time and the payment of union subs through pay-roll check off.

Conference notes that there are many employers, not only in Wales, willing to work with trade unions to improve services for the public and who recognise the value of trade unions. The motivation for the Wales Government proposing its own legislation was the success of its public services Workforce Partnership Council in improving services and industrial relations.

Conference rejects any argument that large scale industrial action ballots involving thousands of workers are now "impossible" to win due to low turnouts. Clear national leadership, the development of strong workplace organisation and the encouragement of mass participation in the campaign to win a ballot can drive up turnouts despite the obstacles presented by the Act.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to campaign against the Trade Union Act and seek its repeal at the earliest opportunity;

- 2) Promote the value of facility time so that if employers have to record its deployment it is in terms of the considerable benefits not just costs;
- 3) Recognise that away from the Westminster parliament there are important institutions and politicians with their own democratic mandates and positive commitment to trade unionism;
- 4) Continue to work with branches, UNISON Regions, Labour Link and the General Political Fund to build local political campaigns behind UNISON's Objectives that win in the workplace and the ballot box and that inspire a new generation of union activists.

## **42. Media Portrayal of Older People**

**Carried**

Conference notes with concern the negative and profoundly damaging images of older people, both as individuals and collectively, that are continually and consistently put out by the mass media in Britain. This includes portrayal of the age group as having access to large pensions, doing little that is worthwhile and at the same time being a drain on society's resources and a burden on younger generations. The media and politicians have whipped up a "phoney war" between young and old implying that pensioners have escaped the worst impacts of the austerity measures at the expense of the younger generation.

This attitude is illustrated by the following statement issued by the Work and Pensions Select Committee to launch its inquiry into intergenerational fairness: "the current generation of people in or approaching retirement will over the course of their lifetimes have

enjoyed and accumulated much more housing and financial wealth, public service usage, and welfare and pension entitlements than more recent generations can hope to receive”.

During the past year, elements of the media seem aggressively intent on portraying older people in a negative manner, claiming that hard-won benefits such as free prescriptions, winter fuel allowance and bus passes give pensioners an undeserved privileged position in society. The implication is that some of them should be withdrawn. In truth we know that for many, such benefits make the difference between a frugal lifestyle and one of poverty.

Conference does not believe that pensioners have escaped austerity and notes the following facts:

- 1) Almost 40% of those aged 65 and over in the UK experienced poverty at least once between 2010 and 2013, compared with around 30% of those under 65;
- 2) 42% of older people in the UK said they have struggled to afford essential items such as food, gas, electricity;
- 3) Cuts to adult social care budgets mean that 1.5 million older people in England have care and support needs that the state does not meet and either have to fund themselves or go without;
- 4) Meals on wheels services have been reduced over the last five years from 300,000 to just 109,000. At the same time, the average price of a meal has increased by 22% and malnutrition among older people costs the NHS an estimated £13 billion a year.



**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

Far from enjoying gold plated pensions and untold wealth, millions are living in poverty or fear of poverty. Services on which the majority of older people disproportionately rely have been cut or are under threat. Pensions and benefits have so declined in value that even basic needs cannot be met and thousands die each winter from cold related causes. At the same time the contribution of unpaid labour by older people is a vital part of the bedrock of society without which families and communities could not survive.

Indeed, comparing a pension to a benefit drives retirees 'up the wall' as they have worked all their life for it, said Steve Webb when he was the Pensions Minister in 2014. He also said that people earn their state pension throughout their working lives by paying their national insurance contributions and feel "stigmatised" by the idea they are claiming benefits. In 2016 nothing has changed much, where both the government and news media still fail to recognise the fact that most of today's pensioners are receiving a return on their investment in the state and not some form of hand-out, and continue to portray those in receipt of pensioner entitlements in much the same way as other traditional benefits.

Quite often the media seeks to draw an unfair comparison between pensioner entitlements and the wider working community, failing to recognise the many years of hard work put in by most of today's pensioners to earn the right to receive a decent pension, concessionary travel and free prescriptions.

Conference is concerned that the myths about wealthy pensioners immune to the effects of the austerity

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

measures will be used to attack the universal benefits which improve the quality of life for many older people.

Conference believes that the myths must be challenged at every opportunity. In reality, means-testing the winter fuel allowance would have little impact on intergenerational inequality; and there has never been any data to show that 18 year olds are demanding that their grandparents' bus passes or winter fuel allowances should be taken away.

Maligning pensioners has become a media habit and Conference needs to combat this attitude urgently. We are in a difficult position in that we can't withdraw our labour to make the point but we can counter the attacks by stating the truth. Many of us have been in paid employment for many years, perhaps raised a family and maybe engaged in house purchase. During this time, we have fully met our obligations to the tax system and indeed continue to do so. Who are these people supposedly deprived by us avaricious pensioners? Is it our families, those we most value and support? Are they complaining about us being given more than our share? Of course they are not. They, like us, know it for the nonsense it is.

Also, Conference welcomes the Trades Union Congress publication, "Young against Old? What's really causing Wealth Inequality?" which argues that:

- a) The principal factors leading to wealth inequality are housing tenure, geography and earnings, not age. The wealthiest households are mainly of working age, not pensioners, and there is no good reason to target

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

pensioners in order to increase support for young people;

- b) Means-testing or reducing public spending on older people would have little impact on young people's long-term prospects; and,
- c) The main factors influencing whether young and middle aged people can accumulate wealth through property and pensions are wage levels, job security and housing tenure not public spending.

The truth as stated earlier this year in the excellent National Pensioners Convention submission to the Works and Pensions Select Committee is that the contribution made by pensioners to our society every year vastly exceeds the cost of pensioner benefits by billions of pounds.

Conference is alarmed at the impact of this coverage which creates discord between generations, builds resentment and hostility and promotes and supports discrimination against and exploitation of older people. It significantly increases their vulnerability, leaving them open to abuse by family and strangers. It derecognises the potential of their energy, knowledge, skills and wisdom from which society could so much benefit.

Further, older people are characterised as being “behind the times”, unable and unwilling to communicate through modern technologies and hence as being in a large measure responsible for their own isolation. They are disproportionately depicted as victims and objects of pity. Their economic, social and cultural contribution to society, past and present, is largely ignored. They are

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

under-represented as authors, experts and contributors to the public arena. Older women LGBT people and Black people are particularly vulnerable both to negative imagery and “invisibility”.

Conference urges the National Executive Council to campaign vigorously with the government and news media to change the way pensions and other entitlements are promoted and reported to the general public. It calls on the National Executive Council to:

- i) Work closely with the National Pensioners Convention, Trades Union Congress, Scottish Trades Union Congress, Scottish Pensioners Forum, other trades unions and relevant organisations to gain support for a campaign seeking to ensure that positive and diverse images of older people are maintained and strengthened in our union, the wider labour movement and in society;
- ii) Urgently organise a campaign strategy to make our concerns known to the relevant media sources;
- iii) Make the TUC publication “Young against Old?” widely available; use the electronic replacement for Interactive to promote it; ensure its main arguments are reflected in the UNISON Charter for Older People, once reprinted; and, seek ways to make common cause with the Young Members’ Organisation on these issues;
- iv) Raise the awareness of working and retired members of UNISON of the myths that are peddled by the media, their purpose and divisiveness and how to campaign against them;

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

- v) Encourage and support all UNISON members and organisations, and particularly its retired members sections, in countering local and national media on ageism and misrepresentation of older people and replacing it with positive coverage;
- vi) Work with UNISON's National Young Members' Forum to dispel the myths outlined above and to promote intergenerational fairness;
- vii) Report progress on a regular basis in UNISON publications and keep regions and branches informed;
- viii) Fight to preserve pensioners' rights for future generations.

**55.UNISON and the WASPI campaign**

**Carried**

Conference is aware that in recent years governments have increased the state pension for all women born on or after 6 April 1951.

The Conservative government's Pension Act (1995) included the provision to raise the pension age of women from 60 to 65, in line with men's retirement age. The subsequent Pension Act (2011) implemented a much faster timetable for bringing in the changes.

Whilst the equalisation of State Pension Age was necessary to meet equality obligations, the impact of the equalisation and subsequent raise in the State Pension Age is greater on women, who are historically significantly lower paid and more likely to have to rely on their state pension alone.

Further, account has not been sufficiently taken of women's childcare and caring responsibilities; the greater likelihood of them working part-time; and the qualification period in respect of paid employment which creates another barrier for women who are unable to comply with this requirement and achieve the maximum state pension.

Retirement plans for these women have been shattered with devastating consequences. When this group of women started work they were generally paid much less than men and often excluded from workplace pension schemes. Their generation has benefitted little from the social and legal changes that have improved working women's lives and yet they are now being asked to shoulder much of the burden of equalisation with men. This change will affect over 2.5 million women suffering huge financial losses whilst not having been given enough notice to make alternative plans for their retirement.

Women who had anticipated an earlier retirement are now facing redundancy as public sector cuts bite. Further, many employers are reluctant to employ older workers, and many women of the "sandwich generation" are called on to care for elderly dependants and grandchildren.

The Women Against State Pension Inequality (WASPI) campaign was established to fight the injustice caused to women born on or after 6 April 1951, and for transitional arrangements to be put in place. They do not dispute the need for equalisation of the State Pension Age for men and women.

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

They have challenged the government who ignored the Turner Commission and SAGA recommendations that between 10 and 15 years notice should be given to women who would be affected by the changes; failed to notify many thousands of women of the changes; and accelerated the timetable without due notice.

UNISON has a long history of campaigning and negotiating for decent state and occupational pensions for our members. Now, more than ever, it is essential to continue that fight, and to ensure that women of all ages are aware of the implications of failing to invest in a future pension, and of what the future may hold in terms of their state pension.

Conference also believes that the women who have been so unjustly treated by this and previous governments deserve our support.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to work with the National Women's Committee, WASPI and other relevant bodies to use whatever means possible in the campaign to introduce a fairer transitional arrangement for the women affected.

This work to include:

- 1) Continuing our support for the WASPI national campaign;
- 2) Raising awareness of the issue and providing information for branches and affected members on how to lobby their MP and register their interest with the Department of Work and Pensions;

- 3) Lobbying MPs to support the campaign and fair transitional arrangements for the women affected;
- 4) Encouraging branches and regions to establish links with local WASPI groups and work with them on the campaign;
- 5) Continuing to defend and protect members' rights to fair pay and pensions, including recognition of the impact of low pay and caring responsibilities on many women's ability to achieve a decent pension;
- 6) Continuing to campaign for decent pension provision for future generations and a decent, universal, basic state pension for all citizens;
- 7) Campaigning against the ageism which presents additional barriers to older women in the workforce;
- 8) In the longer term, campaigning for equalisation in the State Pension Age to 60.

### **59. Child marriage is child labour**

**Carried**

Conference notes that in September 2016 the International Labour Organisation (ILO) launched the Alliance 8.7, an initiative which will bring together all interested parties to join forces in achieving UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development target 8.7, aiming at a world without forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking and child labour.

Conference welcomes the initiative, which it is anticipated will also address other sustainable development goals, including gender equality.



**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

However, Conference is concerned to note that while child labour is included in the target, the ILO does not include forced marriage within its definition of child labour. Conference believes that urgent action is needed to address the issue of child marriage as a form of child labour, a crisis documented in the AIDS Free World report, *Child Marriage is Child Labour*.

New data from Save the Children reveals an alarming crisis in Afghanistan, as 3,000 Afghans are repatriated daily from Pakistan, following a tightening in regulations by Pakistani authorities. More than 70 percent of returnee parents and community leaders, who took part in a survey compiled by the aid organisation, said early marriage and child labour were major risks faced by repatriated children currently not in school.

With lack of documentation, money and access identified as major barriers for schoolchildren, parents who are facing poverty often feel the only stable choice they can make is to arrange a marriage for their daughter, or enter them into the workforce early.

These girls will join the estimated 15 million girls who, over the next year, will be forced into “marriages.” Instead of receiving an education alongside their peers, child “wives,” are forced to work long hours cooking and cleaning. They work night shifts caring for babies and younger children. Under the control of older “husbands” they are physically and psychologically abused and raped repeatedly. They work in conditions that threaten their lives and their health, suffer human rights and labour violations on a daily basis, and many die as a result.

If these activities were performed in a third-party household, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) would count them as work, and they would be included in child labour statistics, and in international action to end child labour. But because the children are married – albeit illegally - the ILO regards their workplace as their valid household and excludes them.

Conference believes that “child “marriage” is not merely a harmful traditional practice: it is a crime; it is child labour in its worst form, and a complete violation of a girl’s human rights.

Conference further believes that “child marriage” should be included amongst the worst forms of child labour as defined by the ILO core convention 182, Worst forms of child labour.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to work to work with the National Women’s Committee, the international committee, the TUC, AIDS Free World and other appropriate bodies to urge the ILO to take a principled stance, to treat child marriage as one of the worst forms of child labour under ILO core convention 182 and to take action to force governments to provide the resources for proper monitoring and implementation of the convention.

## **61.Working globally for LGBT rights**

**Carried**

Conference celebrates our union’s rich history of international work and recognises that the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) group has incorporated this into its own work. UNISON continues to raise LGBT issues in the different international forums

in which we work and raise trade unionism in all LGBT forums in which we engage.

Conference notes that the 53 Commonwealth states comprise a quarter of United Nations member states and a third of humanity. The Commonwealth defines itself as a free and equal association of nations committed to the core principles of democracy, human rights, equality, non-discrimination, opportunity for all, liberty of the individual and human dignity. Yet 40 Commonwealth member states retain laws criminalising same-sex relations, which are largely a legacy of British colonialism. Trans people also face widespread violence and abuse, though this is less well documented.

Conference recognises, however, that there are signs of progress being made on the rights of LGBT people around the Commonwealth, and welcomes:

- 1) The establishment of the Commonwealth Equality Network, the first civil society group to advocate on behalf of LGBT people within the Commonwealth institutions and Commonwealth Civil Society, with 35 member organisations from 30 Commonwealth countries;
- 2) The higher profile of LGBT human rights at the last Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting (CHOGM) in 2015, with two sessions on LGBT issues included in the People's Forum - the civil society meeting that runs alongside the formal CHOGM.

Conference notes that the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Baroness Patricia Scotland, has committed to promoting dialogue on LGBT issues during her tenure.

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

The next CHOGM is in the United Kingdom (UK) in 2018.

Conference further notes the inquiry by the All Parliamentary Party Group (APPG) on Global LGBT Rights 2016 into “The UK’s stance on international breaches of LGBT rights” found “a pressing need” for the development and implementation of a coherent, co-ordinated cross-departmental government strategy for promoting equality for LGBT people around the world, and that departmental commitments to support the rights of LGBT people need to receive meaningful investment and political support to ensure effective implementation.

Conference welcomes the recommendations in the inquiry report for the development of a governmental cross-departmental strategy and the establishment of a stakeholder steering group to help guide its development and implementation.

Conference also welcomes the recognition in the report that “we need to ensure that the stances taken in the UK, whether by the government, politicians, civil society or businesses are effective, and also that interventions are not counter-productive” and that “it is vital for stakeholders in parliament, government, the private sector and civil society to take their lead from local LGBT communities”.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to work with the National LGBT Committee to:

- a) Work with other appropriate organisations to seek the inclusion of LGBT rights issues as a substantive item on the agenda of the 2018 CHOGM;

- b) Seek discussions with the APPG about the role of trade unions and the work of UNISON to promote LGBT equality internationally, and representation in the stakeholder group;
- c) Press for implementation of the APPG's recommendations on development of a cross-departmental government strategy and allocation of the resources needed to ensure effective implementation.

### **73. Exiting the EU - A Fair Deal For Workers and Public Services**

**Carried as Amended: 73.173.2,  
73.3, 73.4, 73.5,**

Conference notes that the triggering of Article 50 in early 2017 is a decision that affects working people, their families and communities in the UK, in the European Union and broader Europe. Young people in particular will have to live longest with the consequence of exiting the EU, which is likely to bring enormous change to the employment and social landscape of the UK for generations to come.

Young people in particular will have to live longest with the consequence of exiting the EU, which is likely to bring enormous change to the employment and social landscape of the UK for generations to come. The Exiting the EU negotiations require that the government both seeks to leave the EU but also negotiates a new relationship and trade deal with the EU. This is an historic European negotiation that must answer both the challenges of today and tomorrow and fundamentally

address devolved UK constitutional and legal issues that also arise.

Conference believes that these negotiations must be transparent, open to trade union consultation. Conference opposes the plans outlined by the Conservative Government to undermine human rights protections through not incorporating the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights into UK law and both parliamentary scrutiny and accountability and the scrutiny and consent of the devolved legislatures in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Workers need a fair deal from these negotiations with provisions for investment in quality jobs; protection of livings standards and employment rights; funding for quality public services, regional economies and infrastructure projects; an end to austerity pay levels; a fairer and more equal society and real future opportunities for young people.

Conferences further notes the governments' introduction of the Great Repeal Bill 2017. The Conservative government has proposed this will be an opportunity to scrutinise, amend, repeal or improve any aspect of EU law in the future. It is imperative that workers' rights, derived from European Union legislation, are safeguarded and maintained during both EU negotiations and in the future, after the exit date of the UK from the EU. No changes should be made to relevant workers rights legislation except through primary legislation open to full parliamentary scrutiny and trade union consultation. Conference opposes the plans outlined by the Conservative Government to undermine human rights protections through not

incorporating the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights into UK law.

Conference also believes that an EU deal will only be fair to workers if it does not progressively undermine workers' rights over time. Therefore any future trade deal between the UK and EU must include a commitment and a mechanism whereby the UK cannot fall behind the EU on improvements to employment rights. To ensure that UK workers rights continue to be no less favourable than EU Worker Rights in the future, UK courts and tribunals must have regard to positive developments in the EU's social and employment legislative framework.

Regaining control over the UK economy includes rethinking the use of state aid rules to fund public services and new national infrastructure projects. There is a new opportunity in public procurement to mandate the use of 'quality over price' in awarding private contracts to encourage corporate responsibility, encourage in-house provision, add social value in public services and prevent the race to the bottom.

There is also a recognition that the government's national action plan for implementing the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights provides an opportunity to promote ethical public procurement across public services to ensure that slavery and workers' rights violations are challenged and eradicated.

Conference believes that whilst we have the opportunity to refinance and rebuild our NHS and care services the government has chosen not to. Instead between now and 2022 an estimated £70 billion in a budget 'tax give

away' has been given to the very richest and to big business. This is not a fair deal for the public or public services.

Conference further believes that the government must place a fair deal for public services at the core of any new deal with the EU and wider global trade deals. Public services need to be fairly funded, protected and excluded from any new global trade deals and unfair private investment courts. Public services must also be removed from trade deals which encourage a global 'race to the bottom' through de-regulation, little enforcement protections of core ILO conventions and increased privatisation where private operators are allowed to put 'global 'profits and protection of investments before public interest, local economies and decent pay for workers.

Conference believes that in the interests of UK workers, public services and the economy the government needs to pursue a new trade deal agreement with the EU which provides the best economic opportunities for the UK to protect living standards and jobs.

Conference recognises that in Northern Ireland, the vote of the public was to 'remain' and that the current position of the Conservative Government for a 'hard' exit from the EU places the Northern Ireland peace process in severe jeopardy. The particular circumstances of Northern Ireland must be recognised and respected within the negotiation process, with the best options for Northern Ireland, in terms of its future status and relationship with the EU being secured. This should include continued membership of the Single Market and



**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

of the Customs Union. The process of exiting the EU must not be allowed to undermine the constitutional settlement reached in Northern Ireland or the operation of the Good Friday Agreement. Current open border arrangements on the island of Ireland, which are so vital in terms of family life, study, work and trade and which have had a major positive impact for the peace process, must be preserved. The free movement of goods, persons and services across the island of Ireland must be secured. EU funding and support for the peace process, community projects, infrastructure and farming in Northern Ireland must be sustained.

Conference recognises that in Northern Ireland, the vote of the public was to 'remain' and that the current position of the Conservative Government for a 'hard' exit from the EU places the Northern Ireland peace process in severe jeopardy. The particular circumstances of Northern Ireland must be recognised and respected within the negotiation process, with the best options for Northern Ireland, in terms of its future status and relationship with the EU being secured. This should include continued membership of the Single Market and of the Customs Union. The process of exiting the EU must not be allowed to undermine the constitutional settlement reached in Northern Ireland or the operation of the Good Friday Agreement. Current open border arrangements on the island of Ireland, which are so vital in terms of family life, study, work and trade and which have had a major positive impact for the peace process, must be preserved. The free movement of goods, persons and services across the island of Ireland must be secured. EU funding and support for the peace

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

process, community projects, infrastructure and farming in Northern Ireland must be sustained.

Conference notes the free movement of goods, services, capital and workers remains a corner stone of the EU's Single Market. There can be no access to the Single Market if the right of EU - workers to seek employment in the UK and vice- versa is no longer guaranteed and is restricted by various controls. A core principle of EU free movement of labour should be that there is equal pay for equal work in the same work place regardless of nationality and it allows for the expansion of collective bargaining.

Conference however reiterates its opposition to all legislation from Europe which allows the exploitation of foreign workers or 'posted workers' and European Court of Justice decisions like Viking, Laval, Ruffert and Luxembourg which put competition and the profit of business before workers rights and which have also been used to attack trade union collective bargaining, the right to strike and workers' pay and conditions in public procurement.

Conference also believes instead that there must be better regulation of the UK jobs market to ensure every worker has a secure job with secure pay, where workers are treated with equal rights and given decent pay, terms and conditions. Collective bargaining agreements need to be in place in key sectors to stop undercutting, so that workers cannot be undercut by the unscrupulous use of agency workers, zero hour contracts and bogus self-employment.

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

Conference notes that the arguments put forward during the referendum campaign about the importance of EU-level employment rights were not successful in convincing sufficient people for a remain vote. Conference believes that this reflects the reality of working life for too many people in the UK, which involves low wages and insecure employment. Conference believes that the need to defend existing, inadequate, employment protections was not a compelling argument for millions of working people.

Conference also agrees that Exiting of the EU must not allow racists and xenophobes to use borders to divide workers. The 'right to remain' for EU workers and freedom of movement must be defended against nationalists and corporate interests who use these issues to play workers against each other. Workers united in solidarity together are stronger in defending and promoting our interests across Europe.

Conference opposes all racist and xenophobe attacks. We stand in solidarity with those facing such hatred and violence in the work place and in our communities. The UK government should guarantee the right of EU citizens to remain in the UK and in particular recognise the valuable contribution that migrant workers make in vital public services such as health and social care. The right of UK workers to remain in the EU should also be part of the fair trade deal between the UK and the EU.

Conference believes in a fair deal with the European Union in which peace and cooperation, sustainable growth in all countries, and human and social rights must be preserved. At this moment where European

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

cooperation and integration are threatened, conference is committed to continue to work together with our European sister trade unions, for quality public services, to fight social dumping and pursue a Social Europe.

Conference believes that the referendum conducted on 23 June 2016 was not conducted on a basis conducive to informed decision-making, and that if much of the information that has come to light since then had been available, it may well have resulted in a different outcome. Conference believes that, bearing in mind the importance of the issue, the people of the UK deserve the widest possible consultation on any new deal with the EU once it is agreed by Parliament and before it is adopted."

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to campaign for a fair deal for workers and public services and:

- 1) Continue to inform and engage UNISON members and the general public on how Exiting the EU negotiations may impact on the four key priority areas set out in the UNISON Exiting the EU campaign:
  - a) Employment, health and safety standards and trade union rights;
  - b) Public services and professional standards;
  - c) Trade deals/standards, environmental regulations and public procurement;
  - d) Freedom of movement and right to remain. Fighting racism, discrimination and promoting equalities and human rights;

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

- 2) Work with the TUC, ICTU (and their seven point plan), STUC, WTUC, Labour Party, MPs, MEPs, EPSU, ETUC and PSI and other alliances - who specifically campaign on public services, employment rights, human rights, equality rights, migration rights, environmental and consumer standards, health and safety and trade deals - to ensure the government adopts a transparent, informative, consultative and inclusive approach to all aspects of Exiting the EU negotiations and the Great Repeal Bill 2017 legislative process including addressing all devolved issues in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland;
- 3) To campaign with MPs and MEPs for an open, transparent and democratic process over the content and negotiations in the European Union as well as within the UK parliamentary process;
- 4) The Northern Ireland peace process, the land border and the movement of people, goods and services between the UK and the Republic of Ireland.
- 5) To continue to campaign to keep public services outside the scope of existing and new EU trade agreements and oppose legislation which seek to liberalise and deregulate public services or downgrade existing ILO, social, consumer and environmental standards;
- 6) To oppose any new EU agreement or trade deals which undermine the democratic UK right to keep public services public or use special investor protection through ISDS (Investor state dispute settlement) or the ICS (Investor Court System) or 'lock in clauses' which would prevent the right to return

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

public services to public ownership in the future without huge financial penalties for private profit compensation;

- 7) To campaign for a new trade deal with the EU that provides the best economic opportunities for the UK to protect living standards, public services and jobs, now and for future generations.
- 8) To campaign for better use of state aid and procurement rules to fund quality public services and intervene in strategic industries, infrastructure and utilities under public procurement regulations and reject co-operation on domestic regulation that resembles the 'better regulation' approach that the EU has adopted and ECJ rulings which puts market competition and business interests before workers rights;
- 9) To campaign for the Right to Remain for EU workers and vice- versa for UK workers and citizens in other EU countries and continue to provide support and information to UNISON's estimated 70,000 EU members;
- 10) To continue to promote equality and challenge all forms of discrimination, including racism and hate crime, supporting migrant workers and the right for a humane immigration system, the EU free movement of labour and promoting UNISON's campaign to take action against undercutting of pay and conditions by closing down cheap labour loopholes which exploit low paid workers and thereby strengthening workplace protections;

- 11) To campaign for a UK legislative mechanism in the new EU deal that ensures that the UK's equalities and human rights, employment and labour laws, public procurement Socialist provisions, consumer protection and environmental laws are not weakened or downgraded in the Exiting of the EU and that they continue to be favourably updated and interpreted so that UK workers have the same rights and protections as EU workers.
- 12) Campaign to build public support for workers' rights in the UK, and promote an ambitious vision of how employment should be regulated through a more comprehensive system of collective bargaining.
- 13) To call on the UK government to put into effect its national action plan on implementing the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights across all of public services.
- 14) To report back to National Delegate Conference 2018 on the latest information on any negotiations and proposed legislative changes, and to provide for debate on the best information available as to whether the terms of any deal with the EU approved by Parliament should be the subject of consultation with the people of the UK.

## **74.The Great Repeal Bill - Protecting Devolution**

### **Carried as Amended: 74.1**

Conference notes that following the vote to leave the EU in June 2016 the UK Government has consistently shown a disregard for the views of the devolved administrations in relation to the protections necessary when leaving the EU.

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

Conference notes the UK Government plans to introduce a 'Great Repeal Bill' designed to repeal the European Communities Act 1972 and incorporate existing EU law into UK law.

Following the passing of this Act decisions will be made, possibly by UK Government Ministers acting alone, about which elements of EU law to retain and which elements to discard. Given the current UK Government's attitude to equality and human rights in general, and worker's rights in particular, this has potential adverse implications for UNISON and its members across the UK.

Conference notes that this legislation will have major implications for the devolution settlements in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales as it may seek to implement a range of EU law relating to areas that are within the remit of the devolved legislatures and administrations. It may also allow UK Government Ministers to legislate to change existing EU laws without the consent of the devolved legislatures.

Conference believes that devolution has been to the benefit of our members, particularly within the fragile Northern Ireland peace process. Any interference by the UK Government in the devolution settlement, or attempts to 'claw-back' powers which have been devolved are unwelcome and will damage the delicate constitutional settlement across the UK.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to develop a campaign, including working with the Trade Union Council of the Isles, seeking that the devolution settlement is respected throughout the process of



developing and implementing the Great Repeal Bill. This campaign should include seeking that:

- 1) The UK Government does not 'claw-back' powers which have already been devolved in order to weaken existing EU law protections;
- 2) Legislative consent for the provisions of Great Repeal Bill is sought from the devolved legislatures, including any removal of the requirements placed on the devolved legislatures to abide by EU law, any alteration of the competencies of the devolved legislatures and administrations, and any changes to EU law arising from the Great Repeal Bill;
- 3) The devolved administrations are given the autonomy to reach their own positions regarding the retention and development of EU laws, including the future status of EU law, such as decisions of the Court of Justice of the European Union, in relation to devolved matters;
- 4) Campaign to ensure that all our governments uphold standards set by international human rights conventions.
- 5) Further devolution of powers is brought forward if required, including, but not limited to, any powers that are 'repatriated' from the EU.

## **75. Immigration and the effects of the EU Referendum and the Brexit Vote**

**Carried**

The EU Referendum on 23 June 2016 and the decision of the United Kingdom (UK) to leave the European Union sent shock waves through communities with the

immigration debate becoming ever more toxic. The campaign itself resulted in unacceptable language and propaganda being used about immigration generating fear, division and a 'them and us' rhetoric.

Since the result was announced there has been a dramatic increase in racial violence across the Country. The number of hate crimes recorded for the last two weeks in June 2016 spiked by 42 per cent on the previous year. The biggest number of recorded incidents came on 24 June – the day after the result – when there were 289 hate crime related incidents recorded.

With Scotland and Northern Ireland voting to remain and England and Wales voting to leave, the split has left Great Britain divided. The main political parties at this time are in disarray and there is a lack of political leadership. After years of austerity the electorate has shown a mood for change.

With the Conservative Party electing Theresa May as Prime Minister and the new evolved Brexit department, the sense of the unknown is still very much at the top of the political agenda. With the Labour Party's internal turmoil, it will be up to the trade unions to bring some stability and clear vision.

Within the Black community we have to reflect and recognise that many within our community used their democratic right to vote to leave the EU which appeared to help fuel this meltdown of the political elite and had a significant breakdown within many families and communities.

The Labour Party, once the party of the working class and the poor, founded in Bradford where once the sounds of the machinery of the cotton mills could be heard, the poorest and the youngest of our nation applying their trade and the migrants that were immigrants from the Asian, West Indian and African Continents continued the profitable industry of that time, did not get their message to remain across to many of those communities

Soon after the result was announced UNISON called for unity and committed to hold the Leave campaign to their promises, more money for the NHS, rights at work remaining intact and continuing to defend and protect workers and public services.

As discussions regarding the UK's future relationship with Europe get underway, Black workers face a period of instability at home and at work. Our union has a role to play not just in continuing the fight for equality but in providing stability, unity and support to Black, and all workers.

The EU has been active in a number of human rights protections including employment and Anti-Discrimination law. Many of these protections, particularly those around anti-discrimination on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability and age, have been incorporated into UK law by the Equality Act 2010. However Brexit will mean the EU law basis of these rights will disappear. This will not change the Equality Act or other UK legislation however if Parliament wanted to weaken such rights Brexit makes it much easier to do so given EU minimum standards of

protection would no longer provide a backstop to any changes.

Furthermore, whilst many of the rights in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) find their way into UK law through the UK Human Rights Act (and not EU law) the protection of these rights may be subject to change arising out of any Government plans to consult on repealing the Human Rights Act and replacing it with a British Bill of Rights. Something that has been regularly threatened by the Conservative Government in recent years.

As we face a future outside the EU we must be vigilant against any attempt to weaken our human rights or equality legislation going forward. As Black members we have long campaigned for equality - in this political climate the challenges may be increasing but our determination is greater still.

Conference believes the hard Brexit pushed by UKIP and the right-wing of the Tory Party would be an unmitigated disaster leading to job losses, price hikes and hitting those who can least afford it hardest. We welcome UNISON's initiative and report highlighting the EU referendum result and UNISON's exiting the EU strategic campaign and the current volatile and uncertain future.

That is why this motion calls on the union to pursue a number of key initiatives to tackle the principal of non-discrimination and equality and work with the National Executive Council to ensure UNISON, through our Labour link, make this Government and other devolved Governments remain accountable to the masses and

ensure we protect our human rights, employment rights and civil liberties. Conference recognises that the struggles that Black members face began long before any mention of an EU referendum.

We therefore call on the National Executive Council to work with the National Black Members Committee to:

- 1) Recognise that the issue of immigration and free movement of people will continue to be high profile and liaise with Regional Black Members' Committees to share best practice and ideas on how to support members impacted by this and highlight the positive influence of immigration both to our public services and wider society;
- 2) Work with Labour Link to consider how we can encourage the Labour Party and other political leaders to acknowledge and address the issues most affecting our Black members, e.g. falling incomes, insecure jobs, unaffordable housing and cuts to public services – which led to many feeling disengaged;
- 3) Continue to campaign against any form of racial violence, encouraging members to report such incidents and providing support to UNISON members who experience any form of hate crime;
- 4) Seek to work with Labour Link to gain a commitment from the Labour Party for a complete equality review and removing such parts of the law that increases the threat to our civil liberties or has a negative impact on equality legislation.

#### **84. EU Exit - Protecting the Northern Ireland Peace Process**

**Carried as Amended: 84.1**

The current position of the UK Government for a 'hard' exit from the EU places the Northern Ireland peace process in severe jeopardy and has serious implications for the island of Ireland as a whole.

This peace agreement received the consent of the majority of the people in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland by way of referendum. It is an international peace treaty co-signed by the UK Government and the Irish Government and registered with the United Nations. European Community law, its conventions and charters and access both to the European Court of Justice and the European Court of Human Rights are explicit in the provisions of the Good Friday Agreement and the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

The desire to protect our precarious peace process was a major feature of the successful trade union campaign, led by UNISON Northern Ireland, which resulted in a majority vote to 'remain' in Northern Ireland. The desire of the UK Government to pursue a 'hard' exit from the EU is a major threat to the principles of consent and equivalence of rights across the island of Ireland that are core principles of the peace process. It will undoubtedly be followed by a sustained attack on the Human Rights Act, which would represent another disastrous blow to the equality and human rights provisions and unfinished business of the Good Friday Agreement. Whilst Theresa May can repeat the mantra that there will be "no return to the borders of the past", it is increasingly clear that a 'hard' exit will result in the return of a border across the island of Ireland which will damage the fragile peace that has been hard won. Exit from the EU customs union in

particular will also have profound social and economic consequences for both jurisdictions in Ireland.

The current political situation in Northern Ireland has dramatically destabilised resulting in the collapse of our Government after only nine months and fresh elections in March 2017. At the time of writing this motion, the future is unclear. It is to the shame of the UK Government that the implications for peace in Northern Ireland of a 'hard' exit from the EU have been completely ignored.

Conference recognises that the reintroduction of a hard border in Ireland would have an impact on Scotland, Wales and England in relation to freedom of movement, trade and solidarity within these islands

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to spearhead a campaign aimed at making protection of the Northern Ireland peace agreement a negotiating priority within the EU exit negotiations and to use its influence within the TUC, ICTU, STUC, the Wales TUC and the ETUC to secure the support of the international trade union movement for this position. It further urges the National Executive Council to use its influence within Labour Link in particular, with political parties in all five jurisdictions, and with the EU, to garner support for the protection of the peace agreement as a priority.

## **85. Standing together for LGBT equality**

### **Carried as Amended: 85.1**

Conference believes UNISON's championing of public services and public service values has never been more important. Conservative government austerity cuts have left public services reeling, struggling to meet ever rising

demand from services users. Service user needs become greater and more complex as they struggle with financial insecurity due to stagnant or falling wages, redundancy and welfare cuts, insecurity and fears for the future. Yet the Conservative government bulldozes ahead with its anti-public service, anti-worker, anti-trade union propaganda, presenting our hard won safety net of workers' rights and human rights as bureaucratic red tape, to be cut away.

Conference further believes that the voice and validation given to division and scapegoating in campaigning around the European Union (EU) referendum continue to distort public debate. Referendum campaigning paid scant attention to the actual impact of EU membership, with much focus on Black communities and faith groups, and on migrant workers from outside the EU. It fed the fears of disenfranchised and disadvantaged communities. Conference condemns the racism, xenophobia and anti-immigrant tone evident in much campaigning; conference expresses concern about the clear damage to community relations and individual safety and to values of solidarity and equality.

With the public service equality agenda increasingly pushed to the side, Conference is further concerned that minority public services which never had popular appeal are at risk of disappearing altogether. Authoritative research carried out for UNISON in 2013 found:

- 1) LGBT people were facing greater financial hardship, problems finding safe accommodation and increased marginalisation and invisibility;



**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

- 2) A reduction of specialised LGBT services, including housing support and homelessness services, anti-hate crime and youth services, support and help-line services, mental health and sexual health services, and gender identity services, at exactly the time these services were more needed than ever;
- 3) A fear that progress on challenging anti-LGBT discrimination was being reversed and that homophobia, biphobia and transphobia were on the rise again;
- 4) LGBT concerns and needs are treated as less important: a 'nice thing to do' that could be dropped in harder times;
- 5) A loss of valuable LGBT staff and staff with specialist knowledge that was difficult to replace.

Conference welcomes further research carried out in 2016 to update these findings. Additional points highlighted in the updated research include:

- i) LGBT people have a greater need for services because of discrimination they face;
- ii) But they are a low priority for public and charitable funding, so face a double bind with public spending cuts;
- iii) Fears about public service cuts identified in 2013 have become a reality;
- iv) Year on year funding cuts have left LGBT services focussing on survival;

Specialist services are increasingly reliant on volunteers, which is not sustainable. The updated findings are an important campaigning tool to show the damage wrought by the Tory's failing austerity policies. They show the urgency of defending services that meet the needs of our diverse communities – services that save lives.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council, working with the national LGBT committee, to:

- a) Publicise the research findings as widely as possible, as part of our campaign against austerity and for public services;
- b) Use the findings to inform our work through Labour Link to influence Labour Party policy and priorities;
- c) Use the research as a recruitment tool, highlighting the need to be in a union at a time of savage cuts to LGBT people's jobs and worsening conditions;
- d) Continue to push UNISON's public service and equality values in the face of low pay, exploitation and division, challenging the politics of hate and urging individuals and communities to stand together for equality.
- e) continue to integrate LGBT equality issues into our Public Service Champions campaign.

## **86. Race Inequality in the Workplace**

**Carried**

Conference notes that despite efforts to bring further equality into society, evidence shows that Black workers are still being held back in the job market. The amount

of Black members holding senior posts still remains low while unemployment amongst Black people remains high, particularly amongst young Black people, and Black workers are also more likely to be in less secure forms of employment than white workers.

In a recent report published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission titled, 'Healing a divided Britain: the need for a comprehensive race equality strategy', it is stated that a failure to tackle deep-rooted race inequality will exacerbate division in our society unless urgent action is taken. Hailed as the biggest ever review into race equality, the 73 page report looks at a number of aspects of everyday life including education, employment, housing, pay and living standards, health, criminal justice, and participation.

For our union it is vital that we support our members both in and outside of the workplace, and how we respond to tackling widespread inequality must remain a priority.

In workplaces that inequality is still prevalent, Black workers with degrees earn 23.1% less on average than white workers, and a significantly lower percentage of Black members (8.8%) work as managers, directors and senior officers. Black workers are also in insecure forms of employment such as temporary contracts or working for an agency, this has increased in the last five years by nearly 40% compared with a 16% rise for white workers.

Unemployment is also a huge challenge. The unemployment rate amongst Black people is at 12.9%, and for young Black people in particular there has been

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

a significant increase in unemployment. Apprenticeship opportunities are significantly lower for Black people, and Black men and women experienced some of the largest falls in full-time employment since the recession began and as the austerity programme continues.

It is sometimes difficult in workplaces for Black members to feel able to challenge this ongoing inequality. As cuts continue across all sectors some members have advised that they will not challenge or seek recourse if they feel they have been passed over for promotion. In addition, as there is now no legal requirement to carry out an Equality Impact Needs Assessment when cutting services, being able to challenge where and why cuts are made and the impact these have on Black workers can often feel overwhelming.

Conference notes that branches and regions continue to challenge employers when cuts are proposed; however, it is clear that inequality exists in many walks of life, particularly in employment. As a union we have a proud tradition of supporting Black members, this is particularly seen in our Self Organised Group. In the Northern Region for example, there is a very active Black Members group who have continued to provide key support for Black members in the region. Nevertheless, further work is required to support Black members in the workplace.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Produce material for branches and regions to use to highlight the continued gap between Black workers who hold senior positions compared to white workers,

with key points on how to tackle this in the workplace;

- 2) Encourage regions to work with branches to ensure that all employers complete equality impact needs assessments when implementing cuts, and ensure Black members take a lead role in scrutinising these assessments together with representatives from other SOGs;
- 3) Encourage branches to work with employers to seek to ensure more apprenticeship opportunities are open to Black people.

## **87. Challenging Racism and Xenophobia**

### **Carried as Amended: 87.1**

Conference is deeply alarmed at the rise in visible, expressed racism over the past year. Across the UK, racist attacks on Black communities and those perceived to be of migrant backgrounds rose dramatically in the aftermath of the EU referendum result. This legitimisation of public displays of prejudice has led to UNISON's migrant worker members working in public services finding themselves on the sharp end of a toxic public debate, heightened by the election of US President Donald Trump. It has also highlighted the continued vulnerability of the UK's settled and long-established Black communities to racist attacks.

Conference believes this has been decades in the making, with scaremongering and demonization of immigrants accompanied by legislative attacks on migrant communities, affecting their ability to access public services, private housing and banking accounts. A new crime of illegal working makes migrant workers

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

more vulnerable than ever before. It will allow immigration officials wide ranging powers to seize property, to seize earnings, to close down businesses, to enter and search properties. This could lead to a twelve month prison sentence with an unlimited fine for anyone found working without the right papers - grossly disproportionate and likely to make undocumented migrant workers even more vulnerable to exploitative employers.

Conference welcomes the leadership and activism shown by our migrant worker networks for EU migrant workers, African migrant workers and Filipino migrant workers who ensure that UNISON's work is led by their voices and experiences. Conference also welcomes national resources developed to support the work of branches and activists in challenging racism and xenophobia and believes this should be built upon and extended in the coming year.

Conference recognises that the attacks on Black communities and migrant workers include the commission of criminal offences which amount to hate crimes. It notes with great concern the significant increase in hate crime incidents post Brexit, and that 2 out of 5 hate crimes go unreported. It recognises that hate crime may have more than one motivating factor and that hate crimes against Black people, disabled people, LGBT people and women can be in relation to more than one protected characteristic.

Conference fears that the UK exit from the EU will be used as an excuse for yet more attacks on migrant workers as well as the removal of workplace rights

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

regarded as 'red-tape'. This will exacerbate the UK's economic problems, leave public services still reeling from austerity, divide our communities and lead to a race to the bottom at work.

Conference welcomes the continuing work by branches, activists and self organised groups to challenge racism in the workplace but believes that this needs to be strengthened in the years ahead.

Trade unions have a unique capacity to bring together workers from all races and communities to tackle the fundamental causes of division and anxiety: better pay and job security, better public services, a fairer labour market and a country that serves all its people, not the few. Whether it is the Tory Party's claim to be the 'worker's party' or UKIP's attempts to scaremonger and divide our community, we as trade unionists have a duty to challenge them. This is a challenge that UNISON has always met, and will do so again.

Conference asserts that the only real answer to low pay and exploitation for all workers is stronger employment rights protections, stronger collective bargaining and trade union solidarity against racism. Conference further asserts that the trade union movement must stand at the forefront of tackling racism in the workplace and in our communities.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) A renewed focus on collective bargaining and trade union activity to challenge racism in the workplace and beyond;

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

- 2) Resist attempts by the Government to strip away employment protections at work;
- 3) Work with UNISON's self organised groups and migrant workers networks and all appropriate sections of the union to counter discrimination and attacks on migrant workers at national and workplace level;
- 4) Continue to support the TUC's march to mark UN anti-racism day;
- 5) Continue to develop, promote and implement training materials and resources in conjunction with self organised groups and branches to challenge discrimination and prejudice;
- 6) Work with a wide coalition of anti-racist groups at national and local level to support local community organising against all manifestations of racism, anti-semitism and xenophobia, including branches affiliating and working with HOPE not hate, Show Racism the Red Card, Stand up to Racism and Unite Against Fascism;
- 7) Work with groups such as the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, the Migrant Rights Network, Refugee Action and the Refugee Council to advocate for a rights based approach to migrant workers and challenge discriminatory treatment of vulnerable people.
- 8) Encourage branches to take a proactive approach to challenge and tackle hate crime in all its forms, highlighting the fact that hate crime incidents can have more than one motivating factor;



9) Promote and distribute resources such as a poster and leaflets to raise awareness of hate crime and encourage members to report all hate incidents or hate crimes

### **100. Abortion Rights (50th Anniversary of the 1967 Act)**

**Carried**

Conference notes that the 1967 Abortion Act will be 50 years old in 2017.

Prior to 1967 around 100,000 illegal abortions were carried out each year in Britain and it is estimated that 35,000 women were hospitalised each year due to botched back street abortions. No one really knows how many women actually died, but one estimate is that 15% of all maternal deaths were a result of botched backstreet abortions.

The 1967 Abortion Act gave women limited access to safe abortions, but that right has had to be defended many times since 1967 and our Trade Union movement has always been central to that defence. We recognised abortion is a class issue. Rich women always have the money to access safe abortions; it was largely working class women who died in the back streets and who suffer disproportionately when abortion is restricted.

Conference further notes that the 1967 Abortion Act does not extend to Northern Ireland and that a woman was recently sentenced to prison (sentence suspended) for using the abortion pill purchased over the internet due to non-availability in Northern Ireland.

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

Women in Poland took to the streets in huge numbers to prevent the total banning of abortion in their country organising a ‘women’s strike’ that tens of thousands took part in.

The fight for a women’s right to choose is a global fight.

Conference further notes that the Abortions Rights Campaign UK will be actively celebrating the 50th anniversary and using the event to raise the profile of the abortion rights movement and campaign to extend the right to abortion beyond the 1967 Act.

Conference calls on all relevant national bodies to encourage our members in branches across the union to hold events to promote the 50th anniversary and to raise the profile of the Abortion Rights Campaign in UK in any way that they can to this end.

**101.Branch funding**

**Fell**

**102.Branch Funding**

**Fell**

**103.Activity-Based Budgeting**

**Carried**

Conference welcomes Motion 121 passed at National Delegate Conference 2016.

It notes that Motion 121 was intended to introduce a new process of activity-based budgeting, which would meet branch needs by facilitating funding for the activity required for branches to be successful in meeting the union’s objectives.

Motion 121 acknowledged the vital role branches play in supporting members and affirmed the union’s

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

commitment to the retention formula. Motion 121 sought through activity-based budgeting to build on the retention formula, the bedrock of branch funding, whilst taking into account that the retention formula does not provide a growing number of branches with the resources they require to meet the complex and ever-growing needs of members.

Conference supports that approach.

However, Conference also notes that activity-based budgeting has not yet been implemented in a way consistent with Motion 121 passed at National Delegate Conference 2016.

Conference notes delays in the provision of training.

Conference also notes that the system of activity-based budgeting has not been rolled out in time for the start of the UNISON financial year.

Conference further notes the lack of clarity about both the budgeting process and the funding it will release for branches.

Since Motion 121 was passed, UNISON has sought to introduce an entirely new formulation for activity-based budget 'top-ups', not provided for within the content of Motion 121. The effect of this, if put into practice, will be to negate the principles of activity-based budgeting and to only provide a fraction of the funding some branches have budgeted for to meet the objectives of the union in 2017.

Conference believes these recent developments in activity-based budgeting are unwelcome and will not strengthen branches in the ways anticipated.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to ensure that Motion 121 is implemented as passed by National Delegate Conference 2016.

**104. Activity Based Budgeting and the Regional Pool Structure**

**Withdrawn**

**105. Activity Based Budgeting and the Regional Pool Structure**

**Withdrawn**

**E10. Support ‘The Total Eclipse of the S\_N’ Campaign**

**Carried**

Conference notes and deplors the racist comments made in April by Sun columnist Kelvin McKenzie about Everton FC midfielder Ross Barkley. Further comments made in the same column were derogatory about the City and people of Liverpool. These comments were made just days before the 28th anniversary of the Hillsborough disaster.

Conference notes the appalling and hurtful coverage of the 1989 Hillsborough Football disaster by this same newspaper. The editor at the time was Kelvin McKenzie.

Conference applauds Liverpool FC and Everton FC for refusing Sun journalists access to their respective premises. We also applaud Liverpool City Mayor Joe Anderson for reporting McKenzie’s comments as a race hate crime.

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

Conference reaffirms its commitment to opposing and standing up to racism and all other forms of bigotry and hatred. We will not tolerate the politics of hate or allow them to go unchallenged.

Conference therefore agrees to:

- 1) Discourage delegates from bringing copies of the Sun newspaper into any UNISON conference;
- 2) Refuse access to Sun journalists to UNISON conferences and to any UNISON premises;
- 3) Ensure UNISON does not advertise in the Sun newspaper;
- 4) Encourages branches to support the 'Total Eclipse of the S\_N' campaign.

# COMPOSITES

## **Composites**

### **EC1. After the General Election**

**Carried**

Jeremy Corbyn has inspired millions with his election campaign, and the fruit of that work was seen in the stunning election result which has stripped the Tories of any legitimacy to continue in government.

It is a result that represents a massive rejection of austerity.

Conference adds its congratulations to Jeremy Corbyn and John McDonnell and everyone who fought to get the message out about the “For the Many, Not the Few” Labour manifesto.

Corbyn has defied all those across the mainstream press who sought to smear and denigrate him. He has defied all those who said he was not fit to lead.

He has shown the anti-austerity policies are hugely popular and that millions are looking for an alternative. The Labour manifesto contained many of UNISON's policies aimed at improving the lives of the majority of people.

Increased campaigning such as the 200,000 strong NHS demo in March 2017, protests around schools funding, housing and more has been a vital component in creating an anti-austerity mood.

Conference notes that the aftermath of the General Election has seen the Conservative Party enter talks with the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP).

This means that one party (the DUP) to the current Stormont negotiations has considerable influence over the future of Northern Ireland government. This arrangement could negatively impact on equality and human rights, such as women's rights, workers' rights, marriage equality and the delivery of a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland. Negotiations on EU Exit are continuing with a party that does not reflect the outcome of the EU referendum in Northern Ireland. The UK government is also in danger of breaching its obligations as a co-guarantor of the peace agreement, and opening itself up to allegations of partiality at the very time when it should be ensuring that a level playing field on which all parties can come together to restore devolution at Stormont. UNISON believes that should the DUP succeed in securing better investment in infrastructure in Northern Ireland, it cannot come at the price of more regression on the core equality and human rights commitments or the principle of genuine power sharing through devolved government within the peace agreement.

Whilst talks continue health, social care and local government, the front line services our members need and provide, continue to be starved of funds. Conference notes that in this election campaign Labour, and other parties, were able to highlight the way the Tories have threatened our safety and security by their callous cutting of resources to our police services, backed by detailed UNISON analysis.

Living standards of working people continue to stagnate, and public sector pay caps mean that our members have seen wages fall while inflation increases. The Institute for Fiscal Studies have declared this the worst



decade for living standards since the Second World War.

Conference believes that the Tories continue to have no real plan to deal with the exit from the EU or our economy.

The only strategy the Tories have shown is to move the UK toward a low corporate tax economy where public services, health, housing, job prospects for young people and students remain entirely stagnant.

Conference believes that our most urgent task must be to oppose the imposition of an unelected right-wing government and to struggle for a Labour Government standing on the type of policies contained within the recent manifesto.

Conference further believes that this task would be made more achievable by the unity of the labour and trade union movement against austerity and racism, and by the practical demonstration of solidarity in support of working class communities nationwide.

Conference believes that the fight for a Labour government at Westminster is only half won. The resources of this union were strategically deployed in the election campaign to ensure maximum impact, and we need to ensure that momentum that we built continues. Our 'Public Service Champions' campaign must continue and conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign with Labour, through Labour Link, on their popular nationalisation plans and an end to the privatization culture;

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

- 2) Continue to work through the TUC, WTUC, STUC and ICTU to oppose austerity;
- 3) To use the hung parliament to campaign for fair funding for public services through progressive taxation and reversing corporation tax cuts, as well as the campaign for a Robin Hood Tax on financial transactions, to invest in rebuilding public services;
- 4) Take advantage of the recognition that all parliamentary candidates found on the door step that the punitive public sector pay cap was unpopular and a real living wage was desired;
- 5) Fight to ensure that the 'Labour Law Manifesto' of the Institute of Employment Rights to boost collective bargaining across the economy, tackle wage inequality and regional pay disparities is highlighted;
- 6) Note that the housing crisis motivated voter engagement and to campaign to ensure funding for local authority and housing association building programs providing homes for rent and reform the private rented sector;
- 7) Note the fantastic level of youth participation and continue to campaign against tuition fees and to also reverse further education funding cuts;
- 8) Continue to support an ethical foreign policy and an end to the waste of resources on Trident replacement;
- 9) Work through Labour Link and the General Political Fund to build a consensus that the alternative policies that we promote, and that are reflected in the Labour

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

Party manifesto, are the best way of rebuilding our country;

- 10) Promote our Public Service Champions campaign, highlighting the value of our public services and public service workers, using our communications and advertising strategically to support these policies;
- 11) Support our branches, regions, SOGs and service groups in their campaigns against cuts and the pay cap, coordinating our activity wherever possible;
- 12) Prepare for a second general election in 2017.

Conference further calls upon:

- a) The National Executive Council Service Group Liaison Committee to review our campaign against Tory public sector pay restraint with a view to taking advantage of Tory government's weakness and coordinating across service groups, where possible, a stronger response given the new circumstances, including a consideration of the possibility of industrial action within UNISON's rules;
- b) UNISON to immediately call and plan for a joint trade union/ TUC national demonstration in support of the policies outlined in the Labour manifesto – such as:
  - i) An end to the Tories' proposed £22billion in NHS Cuts;
  - ii) An end to the public sector pay cap;
  - iii) The building of one million affordable homes;

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

- iv) The abolition of tuition fees;
- v) Abolishing zero hour contracts;
- vi) Stopping cuts to school funding;
- vii) Decent funding for social care that is not based on a “Dementia Tax”;
- viii) The repealing of all anti-union laws;
- ix) An ending of arms sales to Saudi Arabia;
- x) 10,000 more police on the streets;
- xi) Reverse cuts;
- xii) A £10/hour minimum wage;
- xiii) The removal of Employment Tribunal Fees.

Conference further calls upon the National Executive Council to immediately contact other public sector unions to plan a co-ordinated campaign to break the 1% pay cap.

## **B. Pensions and Climate Change**

**Carried**

Conference acknowledges the importance of well sourced pension schemes that provide reasonable returns so that members can live with dignity after retirement. Conference acknowledges the value of legislative changes that allow trade union representation on pension boards as a positive step.

Conference recognises that the threat of global warming to our environment and to the wellbeing of the world’s population has been neglected by the UK government

and that immediate actions are required to limit the damage that is already taking place. Conference recognises the Scottish Government's ambitious targets to reduce carbon emissions but notes that the UK Government has failed to adopt similar targets.

As continued investments in fossil fuels pose material financial risks to portfolios, funds have fiduciary duties to consider the benefits of decarbonising as part of their investment strategies. Furthermore, trustees may consider non-financial factors if members share the concern and there is no risk of significant financial detriment to the fund – which is increasingly the case for divestment.

By divesting the £14 billion currently invested in fossil fuels, local councils can take an important step forwards in challenging climate change. Reinvesting this money into renewables, housing and public transport is a feasible and sensible strategy for providing a long term return and building safe pensions for public sector workers.

Conference notes:

1) The Paris 2015 Agreement, committing our governments to keep the global temperature increase to under 2 degrees and aim for 1.5 degrees. Carbon budgets produced by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, United Nations and the International Energy Agency show that preventing two degrees of warming relies on not burning 60-80% of all proven fossil fuels;

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

2) Pension funds have a legal duty to treat members “fairly as between them”. That means taking seriously the longer-term interests of younger members who may well be affected more by the climate transition;

3) UNISON is the largest staff union in the UK gas industry and the work of the UNISON energy service group executive in investigating hydrogen with carbon capture storage (CCS) as an alternative to gas in the UK’s supply and distribution pipe network to UK households.

4) The importance of a just transition for workers in the fossil fuel-related sectors such as offshore oil, power generation and the automobile industry, so that they can benefit from a transition to decent and unionised jobs in the low carbon economy;

5) Fiduciary duty is defined by the Law Commission as ‘ensuring that pensions can be paid, ensuring that this is undertaken at the best possible value’.

Conference agrees to:

a) Campaign for divestment from fossil fuel extraction for all pension funds where we have members and we can argue it is in the fiduciary interests of scheme members ensuring that there is no short term economic damage to each pension fund and that an economic strategy for re-investment of the disinvested assets is identified to ensure no long term damage to each fund and the ability to pay pensions.

b) Seek alliances amongst other trade unions who share our objective and work co operatively with them to achieve divestment;

c) Engage with UNISON members with an aim of improving their knowledge base around climate threats created by fossil fuel extraction;

d) Produce literature on fossil fuel divestment that will enable branches to engage with the employers where they are members of a LGPF.

e) Call upon our local LGPS to invest safely for pension holders' wellbeing, by divesting fossil fuels over five years and reinvesting into the just transition, giving due regard to fiduciary duty and if necessary call for the fund administrators to consult members of each pension fund;

f) Seek divestment of LGPS from fossil fuels over five years giving due regard to fiduciary duty;

### **C. Health and Social Care Integration**

**Carried**

Conference notes that across the UK there are a number of current initiatives seeking to bring about the integration or transformation of health and care services. The Welsh Government continues to recognise this agenda as being of national strategic importance.

These include, but are not limited to, the Five Year Forward View and Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) in England, the ten year vision for health

and social care based on the Bengoa report in Northern Ireland, and further moves towards more integrated health and social care in Scotland and Wales.

Conference remains deeply concerned that, as a direct result of the actions of the UK Conservative government, these plans are taking place at a time of prolonged austerity, with the NHS experiencing its poorest settlement for a generation and social care continuing to be run into the ground by years of chronic under-funding.

Conference condemns the government's 2016 Autumn Statement that failed to provide any extra money for health and care services, with the subsequent local government financial settlement failing miserably to provide anything like the levels of funding that social care needs. Integration will not solve the funding crisis.

Conference notes that there are many challenges emanating from plans to transform or integrate services, including issues for staff in integrated workplaces, cuts to patient services, the threat of privatisation and the increasing use of shared services.

Conference notes that UNISON has always been open to discussing new ways of working and to consider change if this is demonstrably in the interests of patients. However, where change is just a smokescreen for cuts, privatisation or attacks on our members, UNISON must continue to respond decisively to defend services and jobs.

Conference asserts that the most effective and enduring innovations in our health and care services have come



when workers and trade unions are properly involved and engaged, as well as the public. Conference therefore expresses its anger that too often this has not been the case, with the secrecy and lack of transparency around the development of STPs in England being a particularly worrying recent example.

Conference reaffirms its support for the principle of integration as a means of improving the seamless delivery of care to patients and service users, but with a number of important caveats around the need for integration not to be used as a cover for cuts, the need for full patient and staff engagement, and the need for integration not be used to level down pay and conditions.

Conference continues to have many concerns about the current funding environment in which these initiatives are taking place and notes that inadequate funding may result in integration and transformation agendas leading to local controversies about where the deepest cuts should take place – potentially pitting community against community.

Conference asserts that integration should never be seen as a way of delivering care on the cheap. After all, there is no evidence to back up claims that integration saves money; on the contrary, in the short term at least there should be an expectation that integrating services actually costs money, as additional funding may be required for double running costs and retraining or redeploying health and care staff. In fact, additional capital funding is often required in order to ensure current premises and physical services are fit for

purpose – the Welsh Government allocated an additional £40m capital funding specifically targeted at the development of integrated health and social care.

Conference further recognises that the current largely privatised model of social care has undermined care standards for those reliant on it as well as undermining pay and conditions for the sector's workforce.

Conference notes that there are often wider issues in integrated workplaces about merging two often quite different working cultures, and these challenges should not be underestimated.

Similarly, Conference has real concerns about the potential for integration, if handled poorly, to lead to two-tier workplaces and for equality issues to be insufficiently considered. Occupational therapists employed by Swansea Council recently received pay awards running into thousands of pounds in recognition they were being significantly underpaid in comparison to NHS peers, but this was only secured after a significant UNISON campaign work.

Conference agrees to affiliate to 'Health Campaigns Together' which organised the massive demo in defence of the NHS on 4 March 2017 and calls on the National Executive Council to initiate national action to protect the Health Service.

Conference believes that the huge size of the national demonstration in defence of the NHS in March this year that was mostly built by local campaigns and the number of local demonstrations around the country shows the potential for a serious fight to defend the NHS. We

believe that the unions should be doing more to build that fight.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign to highlight the government's underfunding of the NHS and social care, and the impact on vulnerable service users and the predominantly low-paid female workforce;
- 2) Condemn in the strongest possible terms any attempts to use integration or transformation as a smokescreen for cuts, privatisation or attacks on staff;
- 3) Continue to support integration initiatives where these can be demonstrated to be in the interests of patients, service users and staff;
- 4) Condemn any attempts to use integration as a cover for cuts or as a means of levelling down pay and conditions;
- 5) Use every means at the union's disposal including the 172,000 retired members of UNISON to challenge damaging job reduction plans – whether in the media, in councils, in Parliament, through protests, demonstrations and finally industrial action where there is a confirmed trade dispute;
- 6) Highlight in campaigning materials the abject failure of the privatised model of social care, and to popularise the case for the universal provision of social care on the basis of need, not profit, by a democratically accountable public sector;

- 7) Ensure that cross service group work takes place between health and local government branches to ensure a joined-up UNISON response where necessary;
- 8) Spread best practice from across the UK, both in terms of approaches to integration and tactics for challenging damaging plans;
- 9) Demand that patients, service users, the public and the workforce are properly involved from the start in the development and implementation of plans;
- 10) As appropriate, work with other trade unions, patient groups and campaigning organisations to build alliances;
- 11) Continue to produce guidance and provide campaigning support where branches are fighting damaging changes;
- 12) Oppose local service reductions or closures, and consistently highlight the root cause in the underfunding of services by the UK government;
- 13) Use the avenues available at combined authority level in England to promote greater investment and better employment standards in social care and health services;
- 14) Ask the TUC to call national demonstration in defence of the NHS.

## **F. EU Exit and Workers' Rights**

**Carried**

Conference notes the Conservative Government's plans for Brexit which represent a significant risk for working people in the UK. The EU has played a key role in

**2017 National Delegate Conference  
Decisions**

protecting workers from exploitation, inequality, hazards and discrimination, and in promoting good employment practices. The referendum result does make Brexit a reality and that democratic decision must be respected, however the trade union movement must now ensure that the Government does not use leaving Europe as an opportunity for deliver a bonfire of those established employment and equality rights.

Conference notes that when the UK leaves the European Union (EU) and re-negotiates a new EU relationship there is a real danger that workers' rights, including, but not limited to health and safety, anti-discrimination and agency worker rights derived from EU law could be lost or watered down through the Great Repeal Bill process and the negotiation of new trade deals.

Conference further notes many current employment rights result from case law emanating from the European Court of Justice. It is vital that post-EU exit these rights are preserved, and if possible, enhanced.

Conference believes that employment rights must be protected in full and that any plan for Brexit must include a provision for investment in quality jobs and the protection of living standards. Furthermore, any trade deal with the EU and other major economies must include a fair deal for public services, rather than the threat of further privatisation represented in the now stalled Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) negotiations.

It has become clear the Tories' vision for Brexit is of the UK acting as a low-tax, low-regulation haven for

unscrupulous businesses. With no concrete plan for creating a stable economy - or how our public services will be properly funded - the need for stability and reassurance for working people has never been greater. Hard-working public sector workers from Europe who came to the UK to work for our NHS, schools and social care, must also be reassured they are welcome and can remain.

The North East is set to lose the most in terms of funding as a result of Brexit, having received £195.4 million in European Social Fund grants and £296.0 million in European Regional Development Fund grants. The combined total of these two figures is the equivalent of £189 per head over a seven-year period - the most money received by any region in the UK. Given the North East has already been on the receiving end of some of the deepest public sector cuts in the country (without the benefit of so-called sweetheart deals enjoyed by some parts of the country) the stakes could not be higher.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Ensure that UNISON plays a key stakeholder role in Brexit negotiations;
- 2) Campaign to ensure that the UK Government does not repeal any current rights guaranteed by the EU, or water down or dismantle trade union and worker rights;
- 3) Campaign to ensure the rights of existing EU workers to remain in the UK are protected, whilst ensuring movement of workers in the EU as a key reciprocal right

in any agreement that allows UK access to the single market;

4) Work with regions to ensure engagement with MPs, MEPs, Councillors, citizens, employees, trade unions, employers and community organisations on alternative economic strategies that benefit working people in the region within the context of Brexit.

5) Work with the ETUC, TUC, STUC, WTUC and ICTU to review employment legislation that may be at risk;

6) Work with Labour Link to make sure the Labour Party fully understand the arguments around protecting and improving current employment rights;

7) Ensure political lobbying of MPs includes MPs and Lords of all parties, including the Conservative Party;

8) Work with MEPs and devolved parliamentary and assembly members to ensure that devolution issues are properly considered and full protections offered to devolved nations;

9) Work with our self organised groups so that equalities are at the heart of our response to post-EU exit issues around employment rights and health and safety;

10) Develop resources for branches to support them in their campaigning with our members and the wider public on why it is important to protect workers' rights.

# AMENDMENT TO RULES



## **Amendment to Rules**

### **1. Rule C Becoming a Member**

**Carried**

#### **C 5.1**

Insert “or by using the prescribed on-line system for joining” after “sign a prescribed form of application for membership”

At the end of C 5.1 add “Membership shall commence on the date details of membership are entered into the membership records system.”

### **2. Rule D Structure of the Union at National Level**

**Carried**

#### **Rule D 2.1**

Replace “a young members’ seat” with “two young members’ seats”

#### **Rule D 2.5**

Amend title – replace "seat" with "seats"

In first paragraph: replace “representative” with “two representatives, at least one of whom must be a woman”

In second paragraph: Replace “seat” with “seats”

#### **Rule D 6.2**

Replace “member elected to the young members” seat” with “members elected to the young members’ seats”

### **3. Rule M Data Protection Act policy**

**Carried**

M 6

Delete existing title and replace with “M6 Data protection”

In M 6.2 insert “and requirements” after “data protection principles”

Delete existing M 6.4 and replace with:

“6.4 a member seeking to enforce his/her rights should address them to the Data Protection Officer. Any such requests that are received by a branch or union official should be forwarded to the Data Protection Officer immediately.”

Add new M 6.5:

“6.5 From 25 May 2018 all references to the Data Protection Act 1998 refer to the General Data Protection Regulation 2016”.